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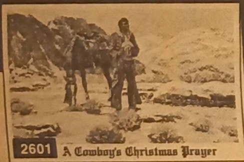
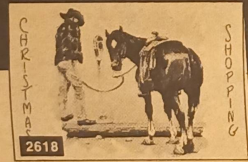
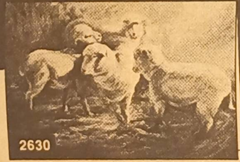


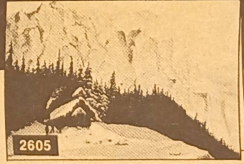
A Cowboy's Christmas Prayer by **Paul Salisbury** – May the Peace and Good Will of Christmas always be with you. **Verse by S. Omar Barker.**



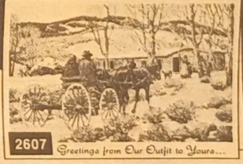
Christmas Shopping by **Robert R. Lorenz** – Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year.



The Lord is my Shepherd by **Quita Pownall** – Wishing You all the Joys and Blessings of Christmas. The 23rd Psalm Quoted.



Mountain Chimes by **Dan Garrett** – May the Blessings and Peace of Christmas be Yours and Happiness fill each Day of the New Year. Quote from Luke 2:14.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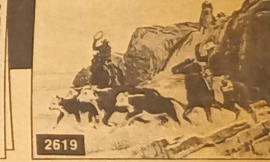
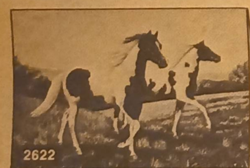
Greetings from Our Outfit to Yours...

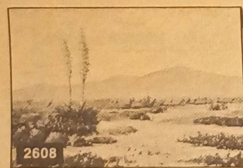
Greetings from Our Outfit to Yours by **Paul Salisbury** – With Best Wishes at Christmas and Happiness through All the Coming Year.



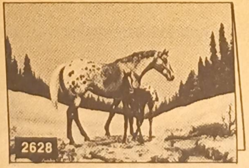
Ridin' Herd by **Robert Lougheed** – May the Peace and Happiness of the Christmas Season abide with You through all the Coming Year. **Verse by S. Omar Barker.**



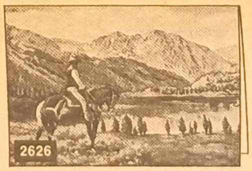
Holiday Spirit by **Betty Marble** – With very Best Wishes for a Happy Holiday Season and the New Year.



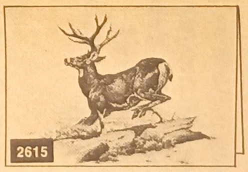
Candles of the Lord by **Harry Zutto** – May the Blessings of Christmas be with You Today and always. Legend of the Yucca Blossom inside.



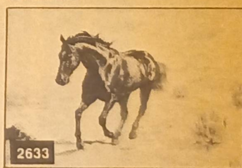
Blessed Christmas by **Betty Marble** – May the Joy and Peace of Christmas always be with You.



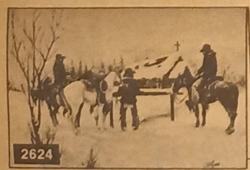
Reflections by **Harry Zutto** – May the Blessings of Christmas Abide with You throughout the New Year.



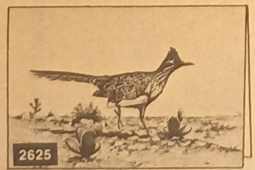
Star of the Forest by **Clark Bronson** – Christmas Greetings and Best Wishes for All the Year.



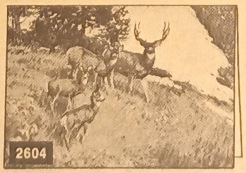
Born Free by **Gregory Perillo** – Coming your Way to wish You a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



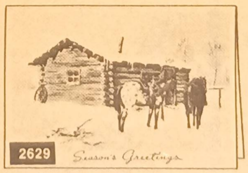
Christmas Bells by **Ted Long** – May the Spirit of Peace and Good Will be Yours during the Holiday Season and throughout the Coming Year. Quote from Psalm 118:24 "This is the Day the Lord hath made . . ."



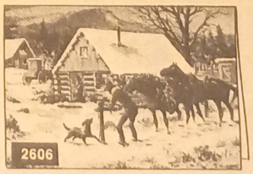
Road Runner Holiday by **Clark Bronson** – Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for a new Year full of Happiness.



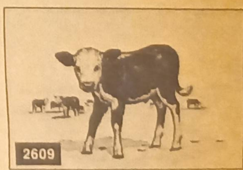
Feeding the Slopes by **Robert Lougheed** – Bringing You every Good Wish for Happiness this Christmas and in the Coming Year. **Verse by S. Omar Barker.**



Season's Greetings by **Dave Paulley** – With a Warm and Friendly Wish for a New Year full of Happiness.



Neighbors Welcome by **Fred Harman** – With All Good Wishes for Christmas and the Coming Year.



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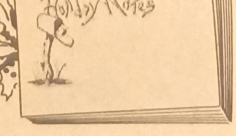

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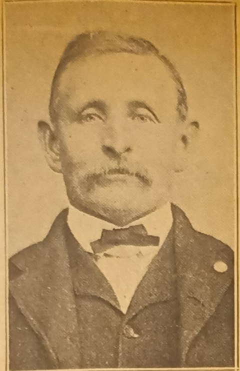
BEGINS ON PAGE 69!

A Texas Ranger's Privately Published True Story!



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Publisher—Joe Austell Small

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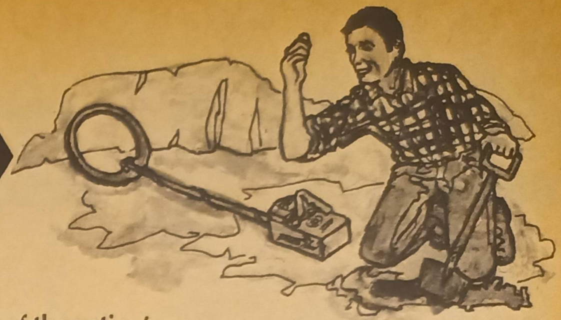

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LETTER RIP!

Bud Jones' Death

In the story about the JJ Ranch in Colorado (OLD WEST, Fall 1969), Ike Osteen states that Bud Jones was sleeping on the ground and was bitten on the lip by a rabid skunk. Mr. Osteen then writes:

"Early in November he bought a ticket for Texas. On the way he became ill and had to be taken from the coach. He died in a short time. Bud was buried in Odessa, Texas." The railroad was built in 1881 in Odessa; Bud Jones died in 1879.

Many times my mother, Margaret Jones Witt, told us the story about her cousin, Bud Jones. Her father, George, did not move to Colorado with his brothers, Steve, Jim, Dibbrell and Peyton. When Bud got to Weatherford, Texas, he told about dreaming that his little dog bit him on the hand, but the dog was not at the ranch. When Bud and his cousins went into the saloon, the sight of water brought on a rabies attack. Grandpa got the best room in the hotel. It took four men to hold Bud on the bed when he had convulsions. When he was better, he begged them to kill him. He was afraid he would bite them.

His father, Steve Jones, was wired but did not get to Weatherford before his son died. In a little cemetery, now called Brother's Repose, some five miles southwest of Weatherford, Bud is buried near his grandparents, Erasmus Jones and his wife.—Mrs. Nellie Witt Spikes, Box 6, Ralls, Texas 79357

Meager Loot for Grave Robbers

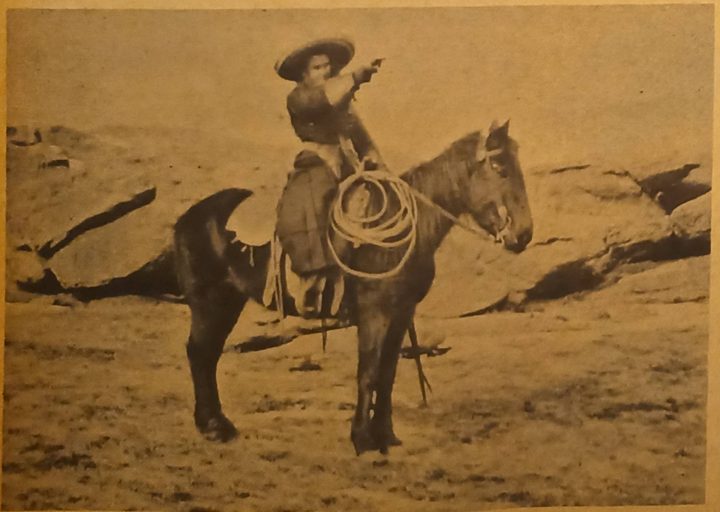
The *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, October 29, 1969, carried a story about Millers, Nevada, near the legendary Goldfield-Tonopah mining towns, and I thought you might be interested.

It seems they've finally caught a couple of young men suspected of grave robbing—wedding bands, gold fillings and the like valued at a few hundred dollars. The desecration has caused feelings to run high among area residents. In one case, skeletal remains had been scattered wantonly over a gravel hillside and old wooden headboards had been kicked to pieces.

One officer remarked that the thieves' digging might better have been done in the old mines, where rumor persists that something of value is still to be recovered.

A normal person just can't understand why anyone would behave this way. It's hard to convince the do-gooders of this fact, but some who look like human beings do not deserve the title. I always enjoy your magazines greatly.—Ray L. Kinney, 300 S. 10th Street, Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

One of Charles Isreal's recently discovered photos. A handwritten note on the back reads, "This is the one I have surrendered to.—H."



Old Photos Discovered

Recently, while on a hunt, I acquired some old photographs. Some are faded, but most have writing on the back. They were found in an old cabin here in Manitou Springs, Colorado. I would like to contact any living relatives of the people in the pictures. I am enclosing one picture. There are four of this woman; I believe her name is Agnes Wilson. There are notations such as, "Agnes Wilson, The Flower of the Ranch" and "This is the girl that has me roped, [Signed] H."

There were also pictures of a George Rogers and his two children riding on his black cows. Also pictured are Agnes Hardy, Estell Cox, Harry Mothers, Georgico, and Emma Rogers and children.

Anyone with information concerning these people, please contact me.—Charles A. Isreal, 724 Duclo Street, Manitou Springs, Colorado 80829

Who Was the Girl in Red Velvet?

On May 31, 1867 a girl, described as beautiful, and a young man rode through Grandview, Johnson County, Texas. They were mounted on fine horses. The girl sat a side saddle and wore a red velvet riding habit.

The following day, her body was found near the cemetery. She had been shot. Her companion was never seen again and her murder was never solved.

The girl was buried in the cemetery, and her velvet riding habit hung in an oak tree over the grave in hopes that someone passing would see it and have some information. No one ever did.

Until two years ago the grave was marked by two rough, cone-shaped stones. On one, someone had chiseled the word, "Annie." A monument works placed the marker that is at her grave today. Even at this late date, I'd like to see this mystery solved.—Mrs. W. H. Morgan, Route 5, Box 10, Weatherford, Texas 76086

The Little White Angel

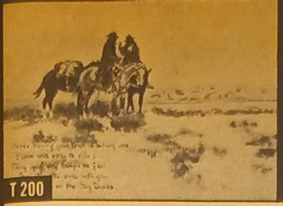
When I was a little gal back in Illinois, one of the visitors in our grandparent's home was an old man whose name I cannot recall now. He had lived many years in the Dakotas and among the Indians there.

His favorite story was that of a little girl about three years old who had wandered away, in a snowstorm, from her parents' homestead. Her little dog was with her and both froze to death.

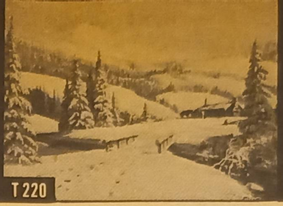
I have always believed the old man's story to be true and wonder if any of your readers would know of it.

An Indian village was near and the old chief, whose only daughter had died, had wanted to adopt this little girl and offered her father many ponies for her but of course the parents didn't want to part with the child. All were good friends and the old chief would come often to visit with the little blue-eyed, golden-

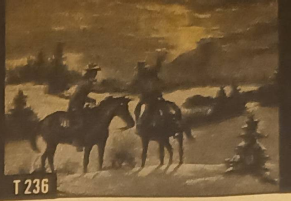
(Continued on page 40)



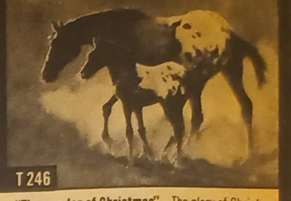
"Here's hoping your trail is a long one, etc." — Merry Christmas...Good friends, etc.— **C.M. Russell**



A Good Day for Visiting — May the Spirit of Christmas Abide With You, etc. — **Thomas**



When Friends Meet — Christmas Greetings from our outfit to yours, etc. — **Lenox**



"The wonder of Christmas" — The glory of Christmas remains to brighten all hearts, etc. — **Touraine**

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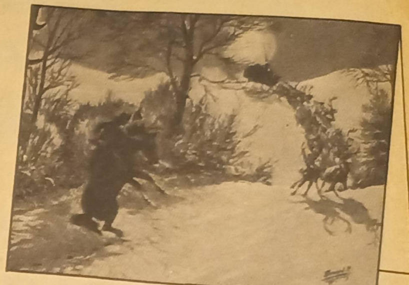

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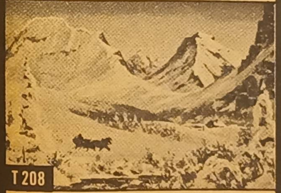
Surprise on the Trail — Merry Christmas and a New Year chuck full of Happiness — **Thomas**

A Memory of Christmas — May you have a Merry Christmas in the old-fashioned way, etc. — **Stahley**

Born to Run Free — Wishing you a Blessed Christmas and Happiness in the New Year — **Steffen**

Caroling Neighbors — Thoughts of treasured friends make Christmas . . . etc. — **FitzSimmons**

"Blessed are they that have not seen" — May the Peace and Joy of Christmas, etc. — **EchoHawk**



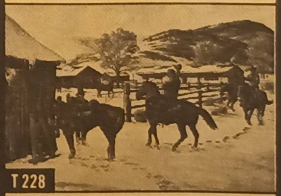
Sleighbells and Snowflakes — From the two of us at Christmas, etc. — **Kerswill**

Legend of the Plain Madonna — May the Peace . . . of Christmas be with you, etc — **Touraine**

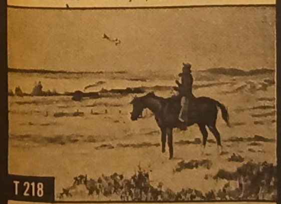
The Lighted Pathway — May the glory of Christmas shine upon your pathway, etc. — **McLean**

"Thou fill'st the solitude." — Peace and Good Will at Christmas, etc. — **Barks**

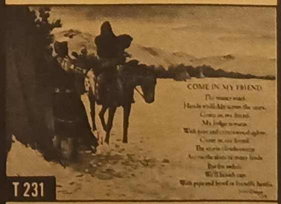
"In the heart of the wilderness" — May the Joy of Christmas be with you, etc. — **Swanson**



Hello there, folks, etc. — Merry Christmas and Happy New Year — **Marks**



A Cowboy Prayer — With Best Wishes for Christmas and all the New Year — **Powell**



"Come in, my friend, etc." — Peace and Good Will at Christmas and through the New Year — **Shope**

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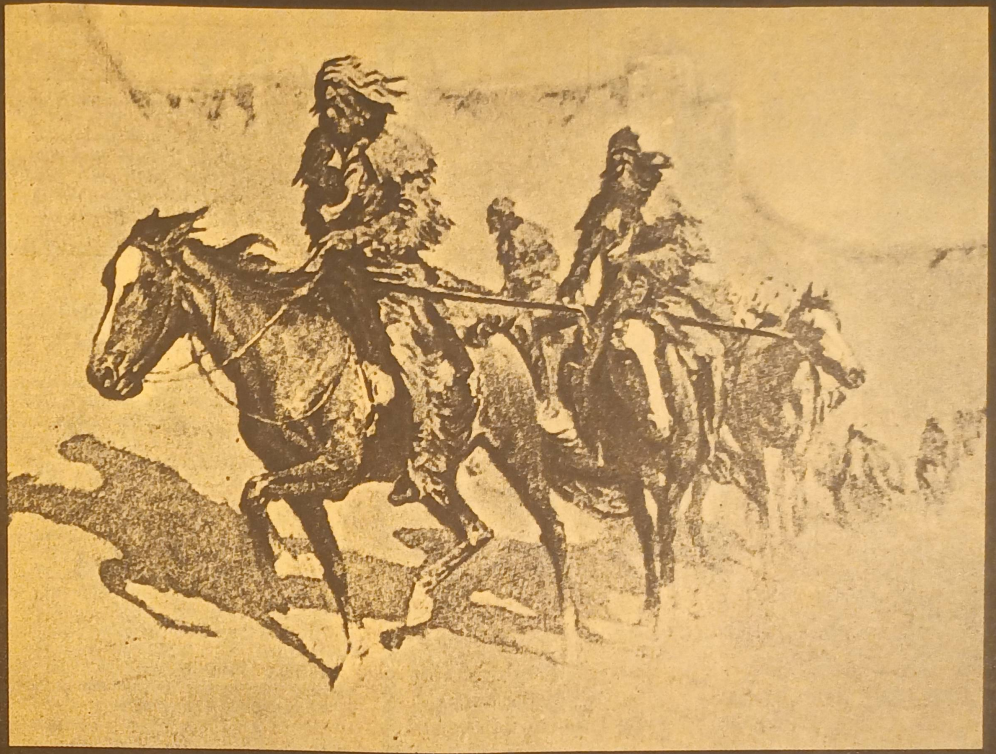
THE ORDEALS OF OLD SMITH

Jed was called "old" at age twenty-seven. The term was a compliment, for what he didn't know about the other side of the mountain certainly no other white man knew...



Jedediah Smith's party on the trail to California in 1826 (above) from a painting by Frederic Remington.

By ALSON J. SMITH

Photos Courtesy Author

EARLY on the morning of August 16, 1826, a column of seventeen men and fifty horses rode out of Cache Valley, on what is now the Utah-Idaho boundary, heading south and west. The men were employes of the new firm of Smith, Jackson and Sublette, "Indian traders on the east and west sides of the Rocky Mountains." At the head of the cavallard rode Jedediah Smith, senior partner in the firm, twenty-seven years old, six feet tall, blue-eyed, hawk-nosed, his tanned face deeply scarred as the result of an almost-fatal skirmish with a grizzly bear three years before.

He wore a blue bandana about his head, and was dressed in the mountain man's usual buckskin shirt, blanket-cloth leggings, and *parfleche* moccasins which could be boiled and eaten in an emergency. Across his saddle rested a long Hawkens flintlock, and in his red sash were a skinning knife and a pistol. Bringing up the rear of the column was the "little booshway" *(bourgeois)* and clerk, Harrison G. Rogers, a practicing Presbyterian from the Boone's Lick country of Missouri. Between Smith and Rogers were a number of outsized heads and queasy stomachs, for the previous night had been the occasion for a "regale," the carouse which traditionally preceded the departure of a fur brigade from a rendezvous.

Although none of them knew it, the members of the "South West Expedition," as Rogers refers to it in his records, were about to undergo a series of terrible ordeals without parallel in wesern history. They were to be the first Americans to reach California overland, the first to traverse the Pacific Coast from south to north, and three of them would be the first white men to cross the High Sierra and the Nevada-Utah Desert. They were to achieve what Utah historian Charles Kelly calls "one of the greatest single exploits in the whole history of western exploration."

WHO were they, these young Americans who were about to ride right off the known maps and into an uncharted wilderness that certainly would hold adventure and might also hold starvation, death at the hands of hostile Indians, or long incarceration in a verminous Mexican *calabozo?*

Their big booshway, Jedediah Strong Smith, was born in Chenango County, New York, in 1799 of pioneer New England stock, one of fourteen children. Later his parents moved to Ashtabula, Ohio, and it was from there that he departed in 1821 for St. Louis and employment in the fur trade. In the spring of 1822 he answered General William Ashley's famous ad in a St. Louis newspaper for "One hundred enterprising young men to ascend the Missouri to its forks" and launched himself upon a brief but spectacular career as a geographer, explorer, and fur trader.

Jedediah Smith was an unlikely character on a lusty frontier of which it was said that God was careful to stay on His own side of the Missouri River. Smith was a devout Methodist who carried a well-read Bible in his "possibles" sack. He did not smoke or drink beyond the ritualistic peace pipe and formal toast. No squaw, no matter how pretty, was ever invited to share his buffalo robes. In a day when most men wore beards, he was clean-shaven. He was shrewdly intelligent, and had at least the rudiments of a formal education. The great historian of the fur trade, Hiram M. Chittenden, says of him: "Smith was one of the most remarkable men that ever engaged in the American fur trade. He was like . . . Stonewall Jackson in combining with the most ardent belief in and practice of the Christian religion an undaunted courage, fierce and impetuous nature, and untiring energy." He was a natural leader, and his fellow mountain men soon bestowed upon him their highest title of respect—the adjective "Old." At the age of twenty-seven, he was "Old Smith" to his companions.

Unfortunately, not too much is known about the other members of the party. Harrison G. Rogers, the *petit bourgeois* and clerk, kept the expedition's books, disbursed supplies, and maintained a lively daily journal, most of which, unfortunately, has been lost. The other members were Arthur Black, Robert Evans, Daniel Ferguson, John Gaiter, Silas Gobel, John Hanna, Abraham LaPlante, Manuel Lazarus, Martin McCoy, Peter Ranne, James Reed, John Reubascan, and John Wilson. Two others, Manuel Eustavan and one "Neppasang" (probably a Nippising Indian from Canada) started out with the expedition but soon left it for some unknown reason. Louis Pombert did not leave the Cache Valley rendezvous with the others, but he appears suddenly in Rogers' records in California and must have joined up there, although how and when he got there remains a mystery.

Not much is known about them. Reed, one of the two blacksmiths (Gobel was the other), was often drunk and troublesome. Black, Gobel, and Evans seem to have been the most dependable, and Black would stay in the mountains longer than any of them. LaPlante was useful because he spoke some Spanish and could act as interpreter for Smith if Mexicans ("Spanyards" to the mountain men) were encountered. Peter Ranne was a young Negro. Manuel Lazarus was a Jew. Both may have been the first members of their respective races to reach the Pacific Coast of North America—certainly they were the first to arrive on the Golden Shore by the overland route.

WHY were they going? Ostensibly to hunt beaver and locate new beaver streams for the firm of Smith, Jackson and Sublette, but actually to explore. Curiosity, as so often with Americans, was a primary motive. What lay beyond the next mountain chain? Where did the shining rivers run to? Were the stories told around buffalo chip fires true? Did a tribe of white Indians called "Munchies" actually inhabit a high walled-in valley to the southwest? Did flowers really grow in every month of the year in California? And, most important of all, did the flashing-eyed *señoritas* actually consider it an honor to be made love to by an American—or was that just sailor's brag by the Yankees who manned the Boston ships?

The plan, as worked out by the young partners at the Cache Valley rendezvous, was simple enough. Most of the maps of the day showed a wide, swift Buenaventura River running from the vicinity of Great Salt Lake to the sea, entering the Pacific at either San Francisco or Monterey. The expedition would trap down to the river, follow it west through the mountains to the coast, then proceed north to the Columbia River, east to the Snake, and back to the rendezvous of 1827 at Bear Lake, not far from Cache Valley.

There was only one flaw in the plan—the Buenaventura River was a myth. Rocky Mountain waters drained east and south via the Missouri and Colorado river systems and northwest by the Snake to the Columbia; nowhere did they breach the immense wall of the Sierra Nevada to fall into the Pacific.

At first the route southwest from Cache Valley was easy enough. It took them down the valley of the Great Salt Lake, familiar country to most mountain men; four of Old Smith's boys had "coasted" the lake in a bull boat the previous February, and "Old Gabe" (Jim Bridger), lying prone to quench his thirst in the salt water, had spat out a mouthful of it and announced that, by God, they had reached the ocean! Buffaloes were plentiful in the valley, and there were hump ribs and "boudins" (intestines) to simmer over the fires at night, and warm, rich, milk-like blood to drink. On their left by day loomed the tall escarpment of the Wasatch, its peaks, even in August, white with snow. To the right, green meadows ran down to the lake, the color of which changed from blue to gray to green according to the pattern of cloud and sun.

Courtesy Fred A. Harrell

Ouray, a Ute chief. Smith's party met a band of Utes in Utah Valley on August 22, 1826.

On August 22, shortly after entering the valley of what they called the "Little Uta" Lake, they met their first Indians—Utes. They were friendly, and Rogers lists "Merchandise presented to the Eutaw Indians by J. S. Smith"—red ribbon, awls, razors, tobacco, skinning knives. Certain rites so dear to the heart of the Indian were presumably engaged in: A peace pipe was smoked, "one puff to the skies, one to the earth, two to the winds and waters on the right and left," and Jedediah, suppressing his own aversion to the stuff, probably followed the custom so prized by the Indians of the northern plains and spat a quantity of "skull varnish" (whiskey) from his own mouth into that of the Ute chief.

As the expedition rode out of Utah Valley, it followed a route traveled fifty years before by the Spanish *padres*, Fathers Dominguez and Escalante. The country was changing and becoming drier; the buffalo sign were ominously fewer. The chief game were antelope, mountain sheep, and a few black-tailed hares. Three days after leaving the Utes they came upon a pleasant little stream that Jedediah named "Ashley's River" in honor of his old employer; today it is known as the Sevier. They followed it south through a dry, timberless valley magnificently colored by red, purple, and yellow buttes and outcroppings. They met more Utes, these members of the "Sampatch" (Sanpet) family, and gave out more gifts, receiving in return dried rabbit meat and a supply of edible roots.

As they went up the valley of the Sevier, the horses kicked up choking clouds of dust. The country grew more and more destitute of timber and game; belts had to be tightened; the men around the campfires at night were glum. *"Wagh! Hyar's damp powder an' no fire to dry it! Much more o' this an they'd all lie wolf's meat fer sartin!"*

Mohave Indian camp near Needles, California. Smith's expedition arrived at Mohave villages in this vicinity October 25, 1826 and there spent two weeks recuperating. During Smith's second visit, however—in August 1827 as Smith was returning from the Bear Lake rendezvous to base camp in California—the Indians attacked the trappers and killed more than half their number.

Courtesy Smithsonian Institution

SOME wanted to turn back, but Old Smith drove them on relentlessly. After seventy miles of the dusty trail along the bright little river between the rainbow-tinted, timberless slopes, the mountain suddenly closed in, forming an impassable canyon filled with a tangle of brush and rock and black volcanic boulders. The river squirmed through, but the men could not. They left the Sevier and rode up what is now Clear Creek Narrows to the summit of the Sevier Divide and gazed, appalled, at the desert-like wilderness which stretched as far as the eye could see. To the east and south the mountains were red and timberless, and the land glowed with kaleidoscopic color. This was a country to which men would soon give names: Big Rock Candy Mountain, the Awapa Plateau, the Escalante Mountains, Kaiporowits Peak. It was red, raw country, but preferable to the somber gray waste lying to the west.

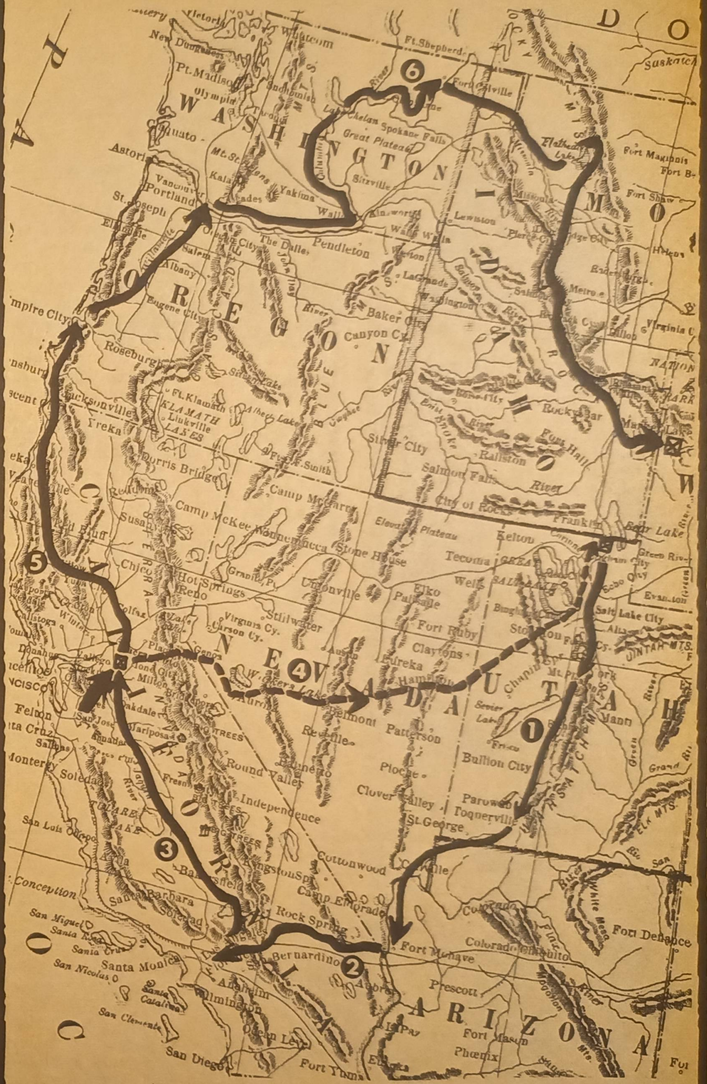
The men grumbled openly, but Old Smith moved them down from the Divide into the rolling, sage-covered valley where Cove Fort now stands. They continued south and west, skirting the base of the mountains, and even Old Smith himself, in a letter written later to General William Clark, Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, called the land "a Country of Starvation—Sandy Plains and Rocky Hills once in 20, 30, or 40 miles a little pond or spring of water with a little grass." Except for a few black-tailed hares there was little or no game. Even the plant life was changing; outside of a few stubborn junipers there were no green trees or other vegetation. They had, without realizing it, crossed into the Lower Sonoran Life Zone and were beginning to see the odd *flora* of the desert—the creosote bush, the wash willow, the weird Joshua tree, the mesquite bush, the barrel cactus.

Hot, bone-tired, hungry, and half-naked, they emerged from a red-walled valley to find themselves on the banks of a swift, brown, southwesterly-flowing river which Jedediah named Adams, in honor of the President. It was the Virgin; the name which would stick to it was not that of John Quincy Adams but of old Tom Virgin, a member of the party Jedediah would take back to California the following year. They reached the river near the site of the present town of Hurricane, Utah, about twenty miles west of the present Zion National Park.

The country had a wild and terrible grandeur. Red-walled canyons rose almost perpendicularly from the river's gorge. Edgar Bryce, the Mormon farmer who once lived there and after whom Bryce Canyon is named, has left a wry comment on it: "It's a hell of a place to lose a cow."

Down the Virgin Old Smith led his half-starved Falstaff's Band. The horses, thin, worn-out, and dispirited, began to die off; every day saw one or two of them drown in the red-brown flood of the river, or slip off a steep canyon trail, or simply lie down and refuse to go on. In many places the river itself

ROUTE OF JEDEDIAH SMITH'S SOUTH WEST EXPEDITION, 1826-29



Map from People's Family Atlas of the World, Chicago, 1884, Courtesy John Wallace

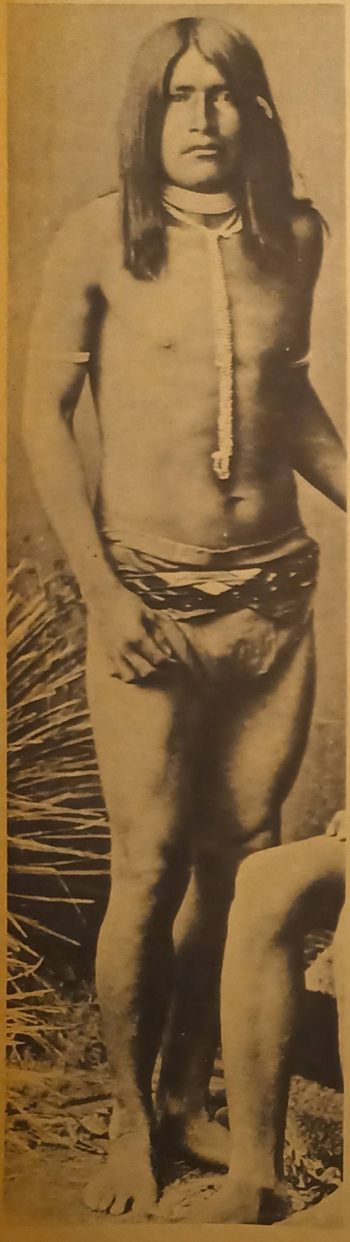
Map of Old Smith's South West Expedition of 1826-29: 1—Route from Cache Valley (boxed "X" in northern Utah) to Mohave villages (near "Fort Mohave") on the Colorado, August 16 to October 3, 1826. 2—From Mohave villages to San Gabriel Mission (east of Los Angeles), November 10-27, 1826. 3—San Gabriel Mission to the Stanislaus River, 1827, where a base camp (boxed "X" east of San Francisco) was established. 4—Route of Smith, Goble, and Evans from the Stanislaus to Bear Lake rendezvous (on the Idaho-Utah border), summer of 1827. (After the rendezvous, Smith and a new party returned to the Stanislaus camp and then to San Jose Mission over much the same southern route they had taken the previous year). 5—Route from San Jose Mission (southwest of base camp) to Fort Vancouver, December 30, 1827 to August 10, 1828. (The party's ranks were decimated by an Indian attack at the mouth of the Umpqua River on Oregon's coast near "Empire City" on July 14, 1828 and only four men—Smith, Turner, Leland, and Black—completed the leg of the journey up to Fort Vancouver). 6—Route of Smith and Black from Fort Vancouver to Pierre's Hole (boxed "X" in western Wyoming), March 12-August 5, 1829, where the expedition came to an official end.

took up all the room there was between the walls, forcing the men and horses either into the swift current or up to the canyon tops to search for a way around.

They had long since eaten the last of their supply of jerky (dried buffalo meat) and were grateful beyond words for an occasional fish or rabbit. As the horses died, their flesh, such as it was, was eaten.

Mohave Indian runner.

Courtesy Smithsonian Institution



A day's torturous journey down the Virgin, they came upon a stream flowing into the river from the north. There on its banks was a shabby little Indian village, with patches of corn and pumpkins. The men greeted it with joy, but had its miserable-looking inhabitants had time to run from the ragged, bearded apparitions who suddenly were upon them, they would undoubtedly have done so. When they understood that the fierce-looking, white-eyed strangers were interested only in their poor vegetables, they groveled in gratitude.

In his letter to General Clark, Jedediah calls them "Pa-Ulches"; they were Paiutes, lowly distant cousins of the Utes, who despised them. They were Diggers—naked, dirty, and poor, and they ate anything that could not outrun them. However, they had certain artifacts, such as a marble pipe and a flint knife, which Jedediah thought highly enough of to buy and send off to General Clark for his collection, and what was even more important, they had corn, pumpkins, a kind of sugar candy, and rock salt—the latter much prized by men whose only seasoning for weeks had been a sprinkle of gunpowder.

Enjoying full stomachs for a change, the column headed south and west again along the Virgin, through a country that Jedediah describes as "remarkably barren, rocky, and mountainous." Two days travel down the Virgin, that stream joined a broad, rushing flood which Jedediah recognized as an old acquaintance—the "Seedskeeder," or Green, now stained with the red sandstone of the Virgin canyons; the "Spanish River" of trappers' gossip; the great Red River of the West, the Colorado. An angry outlaw of a river, the Colorado is no friend to man.

They crossed it (no mean feat!) to raid an old Paiute farmer's cornfield and proceeded down the east side, detouring around a dark canyon where the river flowed swiftly between narrow, perpendicular walls. This, in all probability, was gloomy and forbidding Black Canyon.

ONCE around Black Canyon, the going was easier and on October 25 they found themselves following the Colorado out into a broad, beautiful valley. After the dangerous gorges of the canyon country this valley, with its tracery of green—willows and mesquite—along the river and its dry, exhilarating desert air must have seemed a veritable Garden of Eden.

There were Indians here, living in little round log houses. Jedediah wrote General Clark that they were "Ammuchabas," his rendering of Mohave. They swirled belligerently out of their houses to confront these scarecrow invaders—they had a tribal belief that intercourse with strangers brought sickness upon them—but when Jedediah made signs of peace, they lowered their bows and lances. Curiosity overcame fear; besides, these ragged men were obviously too exhausted to be a threat. They had seen white men before—Father Francisco Garcés had reached the Mohave village in 1776—and there were, dwelling among them, several Indians of the California coast tribes who had fled from San Gabriel Mission, near the Pueblo of Los Angeles. They produced a youth named Francisco who spoke Spanish, after a fashion, and through Abraham LaPlante, Old Smith was able to communicate with the chiefs. He asked permission to camp among the Mohaves for several days in order to rest his men and horses. The chiefs consented and camp was pitched beside the river. Their hosts produced food—corn, beans, pumpkins, melons, salmon, horsemeat—and the men fell on it with a will.

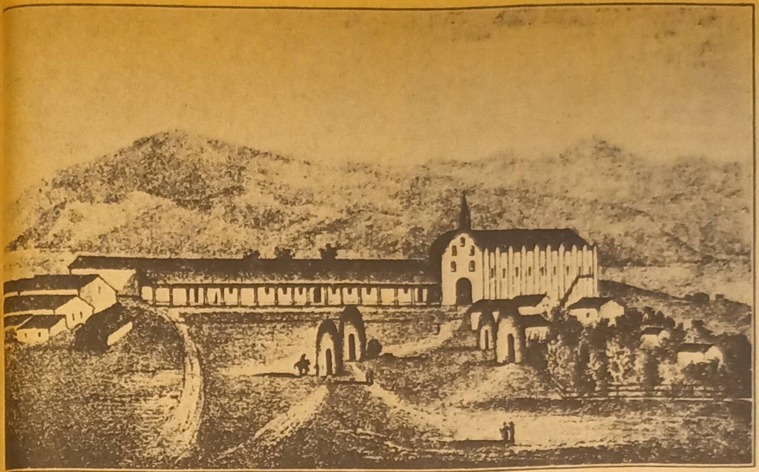
The Mohaves were a tall, dark-skinned, athletic people of the Yuman family, aggressive and warlike, fond of shell ornaments and body tattooing. The men wore nothing or at most a breech-clout; the attractive women limited attire to a brief fibre petticoat. The sight of the latter no doubt played a sizeable part in reviving the spirits of the Americans. In war the Mohaves were especially feared because their arrows were said to be tipped with a mixture of rattlesnake venom and woman's blood and a mere scratch was usually fatal.

For two weeks the men rested, stuffing themselves on salmon, corn, beans, and melons. Saddles were repaired, guns cleaned, clothing and moccasins mended. Horses were bought to replace those that had died. The animals being fattened for the pot (Mohaves raised horses to eat, not to ride) were branded with the letter "T" and so had obviously been stolen, since Indians did not brand horses; but beggars could not be choosers.

The ordeal was far from over. In fact, the worst was still ahead, but—mercifully—they did not know that. On the morning of November 10 they crossed the Colorado on tule rafts and rode up the steep riverbank, heading west, Old Smith in the lead accompanied by two guides who had twined about their necks and shoulders gray, greasy animal intestines containing water.

The vista opening before them to the west certainly did not look like any Boston sailor's description of a green-gold, soft-aired Elysium. The sun glared redly on a gray desolation of sand broken only by strange, colorless rock mountains. Someday those treeless ranges would have names—Dead, Sacramento, Piute, Providence, Old Woman, Bullion, Hackberry—but now, as the first American eyes fell on them, they were nameless, depressing caricatures of mountains to men who had breathed the high, clear air of the Wind River and Bitterroot and Teton ranges.

THIS was the Mohave Desert. It stretched east from the Sierra Nevada through what is now southern Nevada to Utah, and south from Eureka Valley to the San Bernardino Mountains. With an area of 25,000 square miles it was larger than the old eastern seaboard states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey combined. From two thousand to five thousand feet above sea level, it was, even in November, a hot, windy, gray wilderness out of which dust devils swirled upward as sinuously as wisps of smoke.



San Gabriel Mission, camp of the expedition November 27, 1826 to January 18, 1827.

The route across the desert chosen by the Indian youths was west and slightly north, by way of the waterholes known today as Paiute Springs, Cedar Pass, and Marl Springs to the dry bed of Soda Lake. The desert tribes had used this trail for centuries, but for the Americans it was a new *jornada del muerte*. For the most part they traveled by night and sought the scanty shade of the mesquite by day. Old Smith sternly rationed the precious water, but even so it ran out between waterholes. They did the usual things to combat thirst on the desert: they buried themselves to the neck in sand for hours at a time; they rolled rifle balls in their parched mouths; they chewed slips of cactus; they moistened their cracked lips with their own urine. Black storm clouds rolled far overhead, and the desperate men could see the rain falling, only to evaporate before it reached the earth, leaving the atmosphere clammy and oppressive.

At the springs, the first mouthful of water was like a shot of Mr. Turley's skull varnish on an empty stomach; the head swam, the earth teetered alarmingly. This was a sign of progressive dehydration, and with it came progressive weakness, not only for men but for animals. One by one the latter dropped and were left to die, putting extra burdens on those remaining. The men were too exhausted and thirsty to grumble openly, but certainly they thought to themselves: *This hoss ain't never seed the like; it won't shine; shore to make meat of a niggur, sirree!* But Old Smith held them to it and somehow they went on from waterhole to waterhole, until they reached the dry salt bed of Soda Lake.

From Soda Lake on, the trail was somewhat easier, for it followed the course of the Mohave River almost to its headwaters in the San Barnardino Mountains. Jedediah named the Mohave "Inconstant River," and so it was, for it repeatedly disappeared into the desert sands, only to reappear a few miles farther on. The river played hide and seek, but it *did* contain water, and it was in view often enough to keep the men from becoming crazed with thirst.

On November 26 their Indian guides brought the exhausted Americans through the San Bernardino Mountains at a point not far from the present Cajon Pass; they emerged just above what is now the little village of Etiwanda. Now their desert-weary eyes beheld a vision of loveliness—the California of the legends. To the north and west were the rugged San Gabriel Mountains; to the south was a series of pleasant, rolling hills. Before them a vista of green plain stretched westward as far as the eye could see. Clear streams, bordered with willow, sycamore, and elder trees, flowed out of the mountains and across the plain on their way to the sea. The bright green sheen of the first winter grass and the brilliant color of fields of wildflowers made the scene memorable to men whose eyes for days had beheld only the Mohave wastes. Strange long-horned cattle cropped at the new grass, and hundreds of horses grazed unprotected on the unfenced range. The late November air was warm yet exhilarating, and overhead the sun shone lazily out of a clear blue sky.

On Monday afternoon, November 27, 1826, Old Smith halted his ragged band in a small forest of live oaks a short distance from San Gabriel Mission. The two Franciscans at the mission, Fathers José Sanchez and Geronimo Boscana, came out to meet them, and soon the hungry men were feasting on a fine fat cow, corn meal, fruits, and wine. Smith and Rogers were invited to dine with the priests, and Rogers says: "I was introduced to the two priests over a glass of good old whiskey, and found them to be very jovial, friendly gentlemen, the supper consisted of a number of dishes served different from any table I ever was at. Plenty of good wine during supper, before the cloth was removed sigars was introduced."

To men half-starved, ragged, and exhausted, San Gabriel Mission, with its soft, balmy climate, seemed a paradise. Father Sanchez, however, while hospitable enough, seems to have been privately amazed and disturbed by the sudden appearance of Americans who had breached the fiery moat of the Mohave. They came heavily armed, they were trespassers on Mexican soil; they were non-Catholics; they rode horses stolen from the Mission's own herd and clearly bearing the Mission's brand, "T" for *Temblores*—earthquakes. They were guided

Owens Lake (now dry) and the Sierra Nevada in California. Smith's expedition skirted Owens Lake to the south and west.

Courtesy California State Library

Courtesy Hillcrest Studio

Pass in the Sierra Nevada near Genoa, Nevada (Genoa is near the "elbow" of Nevada's boundary with California—see map page 9). Smith passed through or near here on the way east in 1827.

by two backsliders from the Christian faith, former neophytes who had escaped from the mission. And they looked like bandits or Indians—half-naked, unshaven, their bodies tanned a deep mahogany, long hair growing to their shoulders. And their leader, his fierce blue eyes set in a long, scarred Yankee face with a proud aquiline nose—could Attila have looked more menacing? The impossible had happened—the Americans had come to California!

THE two erring Indian guides were promptly clapped into the *calabozo* and, to the amazement of the Americans, were condemned to death. Father Sanchez politely insisted that his guests surrender their guns, which they did. He suggested to Jedediah that he write a letter to the Governor of California, José Maria Echeandía, explaining (if he could) his presence on Mexican soil. This Jedediah did, and shortly received a curt note from Governor Echeandía at San Diego ordering him to come at once to the presidio at that place. He and Peter Ranne left by horseback for San Diego on December 9, along with one William Cunningham, an American captain whose ship was in San Diego Harbor.

With the big booshway away, the little booshway, Harrison Rogers, was in charge of the men at the mission. He had his problems, for there was plenty of *aguardiente*, wine, and brandy available and the men, rapidly recovering their strength, became only too aware of the presence of women, both Mexican and Indian, at nearby *rancherias*. These women were too bold for Rogers. He writes:

"Last night (Sunday) was a great fandango or dance among the Spanyards; they kept it up till nearly day light from the noise. The women here are very unchaste; all that I have seen and heard speak appear very vulgar in their conversation and manners. They think it an honnour to ask a white man to sleep with them; one came to my lodgings last night and asked me to make her a *blanco Pickanino*, which, being interpreted, is to get her a white child, and I must say for the first time, I was ashamed, and did not gratify her or comply with her request, seeing her so forward, I had no propensity to tech her."

While Rogers was repulsing the advances of Indian maidens at San Gabriel, Old Smith was having his troubles with the Mexican authorities at San Diego. Upon his arrival he and Peter Ranne had been placed under house arrest by Governor Echeandía, a tall, dour man who insisted on viewing Jedediah as a captain in the United States Army sent to spy out the land. Finally Captain Cunningham and the masters of three other American ships in San Diego harbor interceded for Old Smith, and the suspicious governor finally issued the necessary papers for the Americans to purchase horses and supplies at Los Angeles and leave the country. However, he sternly denied Jedediah's request for permission to proceed up the coast to the Russian settlement at Bodega and hence to the Columbia River. The Yankee interlopers would have to leave California by the route they had come in—that is, across the Mohave Desert to the Colorado River. Reluctantly Old Smith agreed.

On January 10 Jedediah and Peter Ranne arrived back at San Gabriel. Preparations were immediately begun to depart, and on Thursday morning, January 18, 1827, the expedition left San Gabriel, heading northeast toward Cajon Pass. Each man had a mount; there was a *caballada* of sixty-eight horses, for Jedediah had conceived the idea of taking as many of them as possible back to the summer rendezvous in the Rockies, where they would bring ten times the negligible amount he had paid for them in horse-rich California.

There was some grumbling about leaving the benign climate and accommodating *señoritas* of southern California for the rigors of the trail. Reed, drunk on *aguardiente* and obstreperous, had to be flogged by Old Smith. Daniel Ferguson disappeared and could not be found. John Wilson demanded to be allowed to stay and was promptly fired. Some of the horses stampeded and a number of valuable sea-otter skins, a present from Father Sanchez, were lost. Finally the stampede was stopped and Old Smith got them under way. Rogers records his regret at leaving California: "This country in many respects is the most desirable part of the world I ever was in."

UNFORTUNATELY we have very little record of the *jornada* from this point into the great central valley of California. A couple of paragraphs in Jedediah's letter to General Clark dated July 12, 1827 are all the first-hand information we have. He says that he "went Eastward of the Spanish settlement on the route I came in. I then steered my course N.W. keeping from 150 to 200 miles from the sea coast."

Once through Cajon Pass Jedediah seems to have felt that he had left California and discharged his obligation to Governor Echeandía to leave by the way he had entered. They followed the Mohave River again, leaving it in the vicinity of modern Victorville to head for Tehachapi Pass and the San Joaquin Valley. They went north along the valley floor, trapping the streams which rushed down from the high wall of the Sierra Nevada—today bearing such names as Merced, Tuolumne, Cosumnes, Mokelumne, Stanislaus.

A Shoshoni brave in dance costume. On July 2, 1827 Smith joined a large camp of Snake Indians—Shoshonis—in Cache Valley and accompanied them to the rendezvous at Bear Lake.

Courtesy Smithsonian Institution

They ate well, for the valley teemed with game and the rivers were alive with fish. The Indians encountered—Yokuts, Miwoks, Mokelumnes—were small, dark-bobhaired people of peaceful disposition, not at all the "noble savages" of the plains and mountains (distance lent charm even to the murderous Blackfeet!).

There was one brush with the Mokelumnes, and that was a case of mistaken identity. When the Americans first approached one Mokelumne village, the Indians ran away, thinking that they were Mexican soldiers come to punish them for harboring fugitives from the missions. The Mokelumnes regrouped and surrounded the mountain men, who immediately formed a square for defense. The Indians, thinking themselves at a safe distance, yelled and whooped defiance. Then, to their consternation, they discovered that they were far from a safe distance from the powerful Hawkens rifles of the Americans. Five of them were picked off by Old Smith's sharpshooters. They retreated farther, and finally, by means of signs, Jedediah made them understand that the owners of the long sticks that spat fire were not Mexican and had not come to do them harm. The Mokelumnes thereupon broke off the attack and accepted presents from the Americans.

By early April snow was gone from the central valley and the Sierra foothills, and Old Smith, conscious of his promise to his partners to return to the Rockies for the summer rendezvous at Bear Lake, decided to attempt a crossing of the mighty Sierra Nevada, a feat so far not accomplished or even attempted by anybody. The expedition ascended the American River to its sources high in the mountains, but the snow still lay fifteen feet deep in the passes, and they turned back after losing five horses. They established a base camp at the confluence of the San Joaquin and Stanislaus rivers and awaited a further thaw.

Old Smith, however, grew impatient. By this time Governor Echeandía knew that the pesky Americans were still on Mexican soil. Soldiers were sent out from the San Francisco presidio to investigate and, while they returned to report that the Americans did not seem to be up to any mischief, Jedediah knew that more trouble could be expected from the suspicious Echeandía.

THE FAILURE of the whole party to get across the Sierra via the American River route convinced Old Smith that his best chance to make the summer rendezvous with his partners was to attempt the passage with only one or two companions and a few animals. On May 20 he, Arthur Black, and the blacksmith Silas Gobel left the base camp along with seven horses and two mules packed with hay and provisions and headed up the Stanislaus toward the snow-capped Sierra.

Courtesy Smithsonian Institution

Bannock Indians at Snake River Agency. Smith, Goble, and Evans, trying to reach the Bear Lake rendezvous, came upon Bannocks—Rocky Mountain Indians wearing buffalo robes—in June 1827 and for the first time the men knew they were nearing their goal.

Old Smith, as usual, is terse in describing this first attempt by white men at scaling the forbidding wall of the High Sierra. In his letter to General Clark he says merely: "[We] succeeded in crossing it in Eight days having lost only two horses and one mule. I found the snow on the top of this mountain from four to eight feet deep but it was so consolidated by the heat of the sun that my horses only sunk from half a foot to one foot deep."

The crossing was by way of the gap known today as Ebbetts Pass, 8700 feet high where it cuts through the rocky spine of the range. Floundering through snow with the feet of men and animals breaking the crust at every stride, red-eyed and snow-blinded, they came down at last out of the drifts onto the sharp, rugged declivity of an eastern slope which fell steeply down to the barren Nevada Desert. Here, not snow and cold but heat, hunger, and thirst would prove forbidding adversaries.

Coming down the east slope, they struck the upper reaches of the Walker River and followed it down to the desert floor, passing to the south of Walker Lake. The route then lay straight across the sandy desolation of the Nevada and Utah deserts in the direction of Great Salt Lake.

Of the terrible ordeal which followed, Jedediah, in his letter to General Clark, says in his usual clipped style:

"After travelling twenty days from the East side of Mount Joseph, I struck the S.W. corner of the Great Salt Lake, travelling over a country completely barren and destitute of game. We frequently travelled without water sometimes for two days over sandy deserts where there was no sign of vegetation and when we found water in some of the rocky hills, we most generally found some Indians who appeared the most miserable of the human race, having nothing to subsist on, (nor any clothing) except grass seed, grass, grasshoppers, etc. When we arrived at the Salt Lake, we had but one horse and one mule remaining, which were so feeble and poor that they could scarce carry the little camp equipage which I had along; the balance of my horses I was compelled to eat as they gave out."

The bare bones of the narrative are fleshed out some by Old Smith's *Journal*, which begins with an entry for June 22, slightly more than a month after leaving the camp on the Stanislaus. By this time the worst was behind them, although they could not have known that with any certainty. They had fought their way through the icy winds, deep snows, and freezing rains of the Sierra, and then had found themselves in a barren, waterless wasteland where dusty alkali flats shimmered in the desert heat beneath desolate volcanic buttes and mile after mile of stunted vegetation. Sometimes, half-crazed by heat and thirst, they dug holes in the sand and buried themselves until the implacable sun went down.

When Old Smith's *Journal* begins, he, Black, and Gobel were somewhere in Skull Valley, Utah, between the Cedar and Stansbury Mountains. They had crossed into present Utah near Goshute Springs, then had proceeded to Granite Mountain, and from there northeast to Skull Valley, "passing some brackish as well as some verry salt springs, and leaving on the north of the latter part of the day's travel a considerable Salt Plain." (This was that part of the Great Salt Desert known today as the Wendover Bombing and Gunnery Range and the Dugway Proving Ground.) At Skull Valley they gave some lowly Paiutes their first astonished view of white men. "For years after Smith's journey," writes Isaac K. Russell, author of *Hidden Heroes of the Rockies*, "the Paiute Indians of Skull Valley, Utah, repeated the tradition that the first white men they ever saw were three who staggered almost naked in from the western desert and were half-crazed from breathing alkali dust."

BY THIS TIME they were indeed in bad shape. June 24 was an especially poor day, although they made forty miles. Breaking camp early in the hope of finding water, Old Smith had ascended a hill, but "I could discover nothing but sandy plains or dry, Rocky hills with the exception of a snowy mountain off to the NE at the distance of 50 or 60 miles [the Stansbury Range]. When I came down I durst not tell my men of the desolate prospect ahead, but framed my story so as to discourage them as little as possible."

The parched men dragged themselves forward, walking through loose sand, and "that kind of travelling is verry tiresome to men in good health who can eat when and what they choose, and drink as often as they desire, and to us, worn down with hunger and fatigue and burning with thirst, increased by the blazing sands, it was almost insupportable."

By four o'clock in the afternoon, they could go no farther. They stopped on the side of a sand hill in the shade of a small cedar, and "dug holes in the sand, and laid down in them" in order to cool their hot, dehydrated bodies. After an hour of such rest they were able to plod forward until ten o'clock at night, when they "laid down to take a little repose." About sundown Jedediah was cheered by the sight of several turtle doves "as I did not recollect of ever having seen them more than 2 or 3 miles from water." He searched for an hour, but found no water. Their sleep that night was not repose, for "tormented nature made us dream of things we had not and for the want of which it then seemed possible, and even probable, that we might perish in the desert, unheard of and unpitied."

The following day, June 25, saw them "in the same unhappy situation, pursuing our journey over the desolate waste, now gleming in the sun and more unsupportably tormenting than it had been during the night."

About ten o'clock in the morning, Evans dropped to the sand in the shade of a small cedar and was unable to go on. Old Smith and Silas Gobel made him as comfortable as possible and pushed doggedly on. "We could do no good by remaining to die with him," Jedediah wrote, "and we were not able to help him along, but we left him with feelings only known to those who have been in the same situation and with hope that we might get relief and return in time to save his life."

The Stansbury Range was only about three miles away, and there, perhaps might be water. At the foot of the mountain "to our inexpressable joy we found water." Silas Gobel plunged into the spring head first, and even Old Smith, who knew better, after bathing his burning forehead poured down the life-saving liquid regardless of consequences. (Charles Kelly, the Utah historian, locates this spring as being twenty miles to the east of the southern end of Skull Valley).

Now they had to get water back to Evans. Gobel stayed at the spring while Jedediah took a kettle holding a small piece of meat and several quarts of water and went back to the place where they had left Evans. He heard two shots and saw a wisp of smoke rising; had Indians, of whom two had been seen just as the spring was reached, attacked the half-dead man? Old Smith hurried on and finally came upon Evans. He was unharmed; he had seen no Indians; he had fired the shots himself and made the smoke to indicate where he was. Through cracked, swollen lips he whispered, "Have you any water?" Jedediah handed him the kettle. "O says he, why did you bring the meat and putting the kettle to his mouth he did not take it away until he had drank all the water, of which there was at least 4 or 5 quarts, and then asked me why I had not brought more."

The water revived Evans enough so that he was able to go on to the spring. Here they camped for the night, "that we might repoze our wearied and emaciated bodies."

The following day they pushed on to the northeast, making ten miles and encamping at a brackish spring in the valley. During the day they passed a lodge which was occupied by two male Indians, a squaw, and two children. The Indians were alarmed at the sight of the first white men they had ever seen, but Jedediah succeeded in calming their fears. When the apparitions made signs that they were hungry, antelope meat was produced and shared. "They spoke like the Snake Indians," Jedediah says, "and by enquiry I found that they were Pahnakkees from Lewis's River," actually Bannocks, from Lewis's Fork. They were back in God's country at last, or very near it, with the familiar Rocky Mountain Indians and the all-purpose buffalo, which the Bannocks assured them were plentiful a few miles to the north and east.

On June 27, continuing north through Skull Valley, they came to the point of the ridge which formed the eastern boundary of the valley, and there, stretched out before them, shining in the sun, was a vast expanse of water. "The great Salt Lake," wrote Jedediah, "a joyful sight, was spread before us."

The rejoicing was a bit premature—they had not yet reached their goal, the rendezvous at Bear Lake.

TWO DAYS LATER they arrived at the Jordan River near the point where it flows into Great Salt Lake, to find the banks overflowed to a depth of two to three feet. The channel itself was deep, rapid, and some sixty yards wide. They made a raft out of cane grass and piled all their remaining goods—not much—on it. Stripping off their rags, they swam the raft across, Old Smith swimming ahead and pulling it by means of a cord held in his mouth, while Gobel and Evans, less expert swimmers, followed behind. The strong current swept them downstream, and they had great difficulty in reaching the shore, Jedediah admitting that he was "very much strangled." The horse and mule—the only survivors among their seven animals—were finally gotten across, and the men "made a little fire of sedge, and after eating a little horseflesh, we laid down to rest."

The following day the course was due north around the east side of Great Salt Lake, and they were back on the trail of last August. They made fifteen miles. At supper they ate the last of their horsemeat and talked a little of the probability that their sufferings were nearing an end. "I say we talked a little, for men suffering from hunger never talk much, but rather bear their sorrows in moody silence, which is much preferable to fruitless complaints."

By July 2 they reached the lower end of Cache Valley, and near there, on the opposite side of a creek, they came upon an Indian camp of some two hundred lodges. Throwing caution aside, Old Smith rode directly into the camp and discovered to his joy (and relief) that they were Snakes (Shoshonis) on their way to the summer rendezvous at the lower end of Bear Lake. The following day they moved on with the friendly Indians, and "at three O'Clock arrived at the rendezvous. My arrival caused a considerable bustle in camp, for myself and party had been given up as lost. A small Cannon brought up from St. Louis was loaded and fired for a salute."

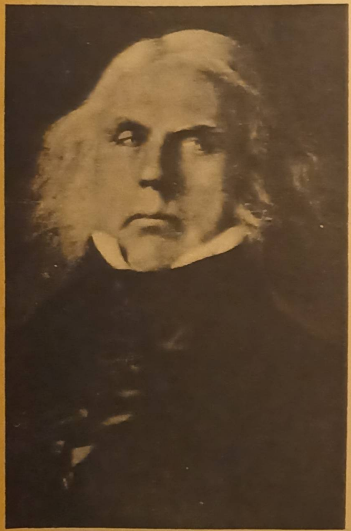
At Bear Lake, Old Smith, with one of the most daring exploits in the history of the American West behind him, was reunited once again with his partners, Davy Jackson and Billy Sublette. Unfortunately we have no record of what was said, but we can be sure that they listened, open-mouthed, as Jedediah told them about California—its climate, its wealth, its *padres*, its missions, its ragged soldiers, its pudgy, complaisant Indians. Around the campfires we can be sure that Gobel and Evans spent happy hours in confirming the reports of the sailors from the Boston ships about the flirtatious, flashing-eyed *señoritas*. Doubtless they were enthusiastic, too, in their descriptions of the aphrodisiacal *aguardiente*, the unbelievably mild climate, and their own fabulous experiences in getting into and out of this languorous Elsinore. With them, from the West, these first Americans to reach and leave it overland brought California as an attainable dream. They had opened a door that Mexico would never be able to close.

IT IS characteristic of Jedediah Smith that, ten days after emerging from a hostile wilderness which had almost taken his life, he should turn around and plunge right back into it. He had an obligation to the men he had left in California, and he could be counted on to discharge it, but there was more than that. "My object was to relieve my party on the Appelamminy [Stanislaus]," he wrote, "and then proceed further in examination of the country beyond Mt. St. Joseph [his name for Sierra Nevada] and along the sea coast. I of course expected to find Beaver, which with us hunters is a primary object, but I was also led on by the love of novelty common to all, which is much increased by the pursuit of its gratification."

With him on this second venture into Mexican California, Old Smith took the following: Silas Gobel, Isaac Galbraith (a Maine-born giant and a crack shot), Henry "Boatswain" Brown, David Cunningham, William Campbell, Thomas Daws, Polette Labross (a mulatto), Francois Deromme, Joseph Lapointe, Toussaint Marechal, Gregory Ortega, (a "Spaniard"), Joseph Psalmer, John B. Ratelle, John Relle, ("a Canadian"), Robiseau ("A Canadian half-breed"), John Turner, Charles Swift, and Thomas Virgin. Nineteen men in all, and two Indian women, probably the squaws of the two Canadians. All but three—Marechal, Ortega, and Deromme—were veterans of the fur trade.

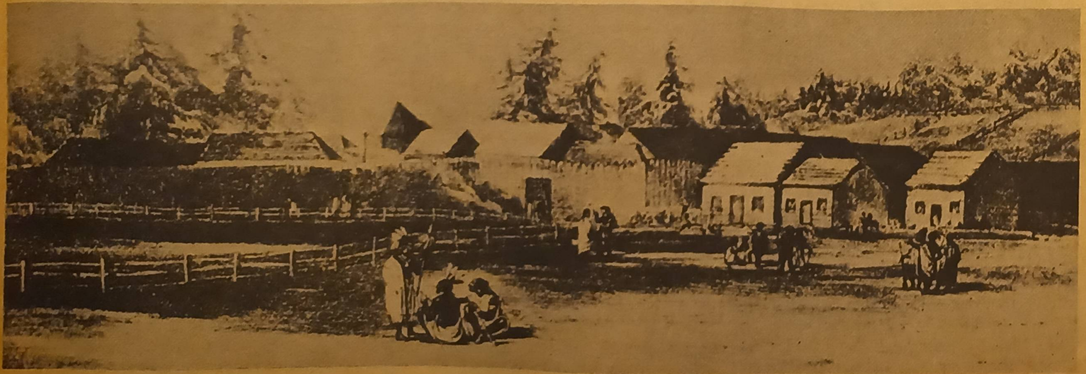
(Continued on page 63)

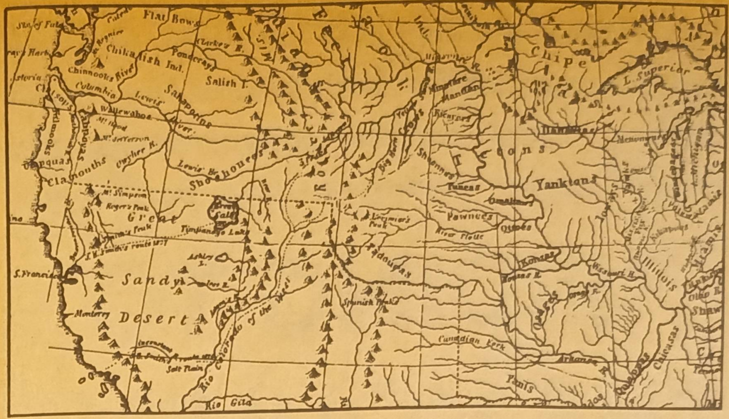
Courtesy Oregon Historical Society



The remnants of the South West Expedition—Smith, Turner, Leland, and Black—arrived half-starved and almost naked at Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Vancouver (below) on the Columbia River on August 10, 1828, almost a month after the massacre on the Umpqua River. Dr. John McLoughlin (left) was chief factor at the post and treated the Americans with great kindness. Smith and Black departed Fort Vancouver March 12, 1829.

Courtesy Washington State Historical Society

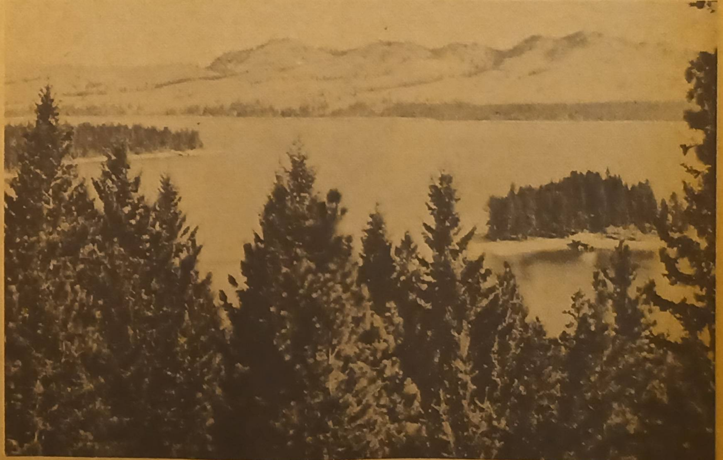




Albert Gallatin's map showing the Indian tribes, published in 1836, was based largely on one of Smith's maps and depicts the route (dotted line) of the South West Expedition.

Flathead Lake in western Montana (see map page 9). Near the northern end, Smith and Black found Smith's old partner, David Jackson, after an epic journey eastward from Fort Vancouver in the spring of 1829. Jackson then accompanied Smith and Black southeast to Pierre's Hole in western Wyoming.

Courtesy Montana Highway Commission



Substitute wolves and coyotes for the fox, change up the saddle and the riding clothes, spice up the conversation and forget about manners—and you've got

"RIDING TO THE HOUNDS" PRAIRIE STYLE

The author (above) with Brin, the pack leader (facing camera, center) and other members of the hound pack (below) on the Circle C Ranch in Montana.

By WALT COBURN

Photos Courtesy Author

MY BROTHER Wallace Coburn was one of the first to own a sizeable pack of hounds in the northeastern part of the Montana cow country, and he started out—sort of by accident—with just one, a three-months-old lubberly hound pup.

Jim Thornhill and Kid Curry, partnership ranchers in the Little Rockies, owned two large mastiffs, one a bitch, and they used the hounds for watchdogs. Let a horsebacker ride up to the ranch at the foot of Thornhill Butte, and the two big mastiffs would come charging out from the barn and keep the rider in the saddle until either Thornhill or Curry showed up to call them off.

When the mastiff bitch had her first litter of pups they gave Wallace his pick of the litter, and he carried the three-months-old pup home across the front of his saddle. The pup was slate-blue in color and smooth of hair. Wallace named him Don, and Don was destined to become the pack leader.

Wallace then picked up in Helena a fleet greyhound bitch called Fly. Fly had already been bred to a shaggy staghound and had whelped a litter of seven pups. Later, Wallace acquired a big shaggy Irish wolfhound named Bridget, and Don was the sire of Bridget's litter of ten pups. And that was the start of the Circle C hound pack.

As near as this old-time cowhand can calculate (without going into a lot of tedious, boring research on the subject), riding to the hounds was the sport of kings and members of nobility in the countryside of Old England. The fox hunters wore scarlet coats, tight-fitting black breeches and black boots with tan tops. They were mounted on thoroughbred jumpers, with an official "master of the hounds" armed with curved brass horn and dog whip. Fifty or more spotted, long-eared foxhounds followed the scent of the wily fox that had been given a long head start, with the hunters riding at breakneck speed behind the hound pack.

Circle C Foreman Jake Myers (left) and Bob Coburn with part of the hound pack. Don, the Airedale pack leader, is the center dog between the riders. Brin is in the foreground to the left of Jake, and Big Blue—part greyhound, part staghound—is at the far left.

The bushy tail of the red fox was a prize to be proudly hung in the trophy room of ancient castles. After each hunt a banquet breakfast was served to the red-coated fox hunters who toasted with pewter, glass-bottomed tankards of musty ale and recounted their adventures of the hunt, a rather dangerous sport requiring good fast horses and skilled riders.

The hunter breed of thoroughbred horses, fourteen-fifteen hands high, was bred for speed and endurance over a five-mile course of high hedges, rock walls and water jumps. The foxhounds were bred for speed and endurance, and they had the sensitive nose of the bloodhound that could pick up the scent of the wily, speedy fox, and follow it.

Only the wealthy members of the British aristocracy could afford the upkeep of large castles and a stable of hunters and kennels of well-bred foxhounds. The same held true in Ireland in the days of the Irish kings, when the great shaggy Irish wolfhound was used to hunt wolves and stags.

There was also the shaggy Russian wolfhound breed, as well as the Siberian boarhound which resembled the Great Dane, and the German breed of boarhound used in hunting wild, ferocious boars. But whether or not the Russians or Germans rode to the hounds I do not know.

THE mention of the different breeds of hunting hounds, the foxhound, the wolfhound, the staghound and boarhound, the fleet-footed greyhound, has its significance here because the members of the hound pack at the Circle C ranch in Montana were a cross-bred mixture of all these different breeds, including the old-time breed of Airedale. The Airedale bear dog was large boned, a fighting breed of hound with plenty of guts and enough speed to run with the hound pack to exterminate coyotes and prairie wolves, at one time a menace to the pioneer cattleman's livestock.

Before the cattlemen of Montana ever thought of owning their own hound packs, there was a breed of mankind prevalent on the frontier known as "The Wolfer" who used steel traps to catch wolves and coyotes. Each wolfer had his own territory in which to run his trap lines. In later years he used strychnine bait to poison the carcass of a calf or colt killed by predatory varmints, and this was done to keep the wolf or coyote pelts intact in order to collect the bounty offered by the Montana Livestock Association—a five-dollar bounty on coyotes, a ten-fifteen dollar bounty on prairie wolves, and a twenty-five dollar bounty on timber wolves.

But the old-time wolfer found it more lucrative to set his trap lines along creeks and beaver dams, to trap for beaver, mink and otter. As a result, the menace of prairie wolves and coyotes for the ranchers increased in alarming proportions.

There was a dugout cellar behind our cook cabin where the hounds found warmth during the winter months, and in the summer the dugout cellar offered a cool, shady place during the heat of the day. Near the dugout was a discarded kitchen range on which the ranch cook baked the pans of dog food. The dog food consisted of a mixture of coarse corn meal and meat from the neck and brisket and other scraps from the butcher block in the meat house.

From **Pioneer Cattleman in Montana** by Walt Coburn
Copyright 1968 by University of Oklahoma Press

Wallace Coburn

It was a part of my chores, during the summers I spent at the ranch, to help the cook bake the dog grub in the oven of the old rusty range, keeping the fire going in the firebox and, when the loaves of dog food were cool, feeding the hounds. Being an animal lover by nature, domestic or wild, while caring for the hound pack I was in kid heaven.

I lived in a small one-room sod-roofed log cabin called the "White House" because of its whitewashed log walls, which was located between the bunkhouse and the cook cabin, and most always there would be a few hound pups bedded down inside for the night. Dog fleas never bothered me and every hound had a goodly share. At my father's and older half-brothers' houses on the ranch I was for the most part *persona non grata* on account of the dog fleas; more than welcome to live alone with the hound pups at the White House and eat my meals with the cowpunchers and ranch hands at the mess cabin.

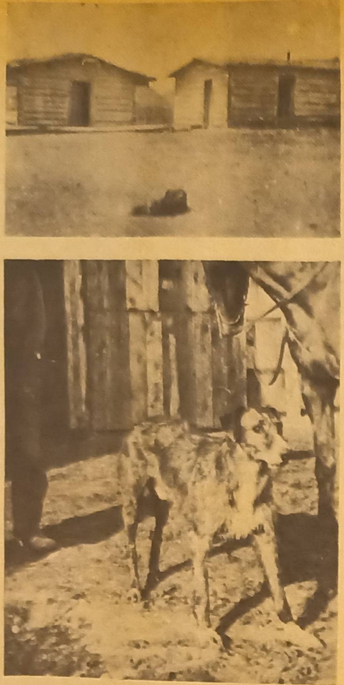
OF ALL the fifteen or more hounds, the big shaggy Irish wolfhound Bridget was my favorite. She had the habit of lifting her upper lip to bare the large white teeth in a happy grin while wagging her long, bushy tail. Bridget always whelped her litter somewhere across Beaver Creek in the tall willow thickets and kept her pups hid out until their eyes were open. Then she would show up at my cabin with a pup in her grinning mouth, deposit it on an old soogan on the floor, then trot away to fetch another pup, until she had fetched in the last of eight or ten.

I had to keep my boots and Levi's and other clothing out of reach of the pups and their exuberant destruction. Old discarded white cotton sox that sold two-pair-for-a-quarter at the office-commissary were the favorite tug-of-war playthings for the pups. One on each end, they would growl in make-believe puppy anger until the sox were torn to shreds in the sham battle.

Some cowpuncher had put a sign on the bunkhouse door which read, "Keep this door shut! Them damn hound pups will chaw your boots and clothes, scatter the pieces to hell and gone!"

Until her pups were weaned, Bridget remained behind when Wallace took the hound pack out. I kept the door of my cabin propped open with a bootjack, leaving space enough for her to come and go. Each day there would be a chewed beef bone Bridget had managed for at the cook cabin, and those bones gathered flies, but that never bothered me. I'd get rid of the bones, shoo out the flies with my hat, and hang tanglefoot sticky flypaper high enough so the pups couldn't drag it down.

After the pups had been weaned, Bridget went back to the hound pack and the pups were on their own. More than once when on one of their hunts along the creek the pups had blundered into a skunk den and got themselves sprayed to a fare-thee-well, and I'd have to scrub them with tomato juice to get rid of the skunk odor, then bathe them in warm water in an old galvanized tub.


"The White House," Walt's cabin at the Circle C, is at left in top photo. Above is Brin, the pack leader.

One day Wallace got an urgent telephone call from B. D. Phillips, nearby cattle and sheepman, asking him to take the hound pack out after some wolves that had gone through a band of his sheep on Wild Horse Creek, killing and crippling nearly a hundred. Wallace asked me to go along, and I could tell by the glint in his eyes that he was more excited than he let on as we saddled up at the barn. It was the look of a hunter. I'd seen it before when Wallace had taken me along on other hunting trips for deer and mountain sheep along the Missouri River and into the badlands.

"We'll take only the older hounds," Wallace said as he saddled his big mahogany bay gelding Prince. "Don and the staghound Spartacus, and the brindle Pedro. Fly, Queenie and Spinner, the fast greyhounds, to head off the wolves until Don and Sparticus and Pedro get there to make the attack. We'll also take Bridget and her last year's litter, Rags, King, Blue and Whitey."

Before I tightened the cinch on my white cowpony, who had the bothersome habit of swelling up when I saddled him, I walked him around a little until I could get the cinch tightened over his fat paunch. I saw Wallace shove the box magazine .30-40 Winchester carbine in his saddle scabbard.

"Just in case the hounds play out," Wallace explained. "If it's the same pack of wolves that's been ranging on the reservation, they're as big as timber wolves according to Roy Long Knife. He thinks they've drifted down from Canada. He told me last week he'd lost several colts to them at the head of Beaver Creek."

AS we left the ranch I counted fifteen seasoned, fighting hounds. I had never followed the hounds on a real hunt before and I was all tightened up inside. I'd been out with the half-grown pups when they had sighted a jackrabbit and given him a run for his money before he sought refuge in a badger hole. They had to learn the hard way that the big jacks could outrun a clumsy pup, just like they had learned not to run themselves out of wind chasing curlews.

Matt Walker, manager of the Matador shortly after the Circle C was sold in 1916, with part of the hound pack which went with the sale.

The curlew at nesting time, its nest hidden under a clump of sagebrush or greasewood, was a wily bird. Let a prowling coyote or dog or a horsebacker come within—say fifty yards—of the hidden nest, and that long-legged mother curlew would suddently appear a hundred feet away, dragging one wing as if it were broken, emitting that plaintive cry, "Cur-lew, cur-lew," like she was badly hurt and crippled, long legs traveling as fast as a horse trot, lowered wing dragging. Let a half-grown hound pup come within snapping distance and old lady curlew would fly low to the ground just out of reach of the pup's hungry jaws, keeping up that crippled bird race for perhaps a quarter mile, or a safe distance from the hidden nest. Then she'd wing off with that derisive, mocking "Cur-lew, cur-lew" sending flat echoes of victory across the prairie, while the hound pups sat down on their haunches winded, tongues lolling, disgusted and defeated. It was a sure comical sight that I'd witnessed countless times, and always good for a laugh.

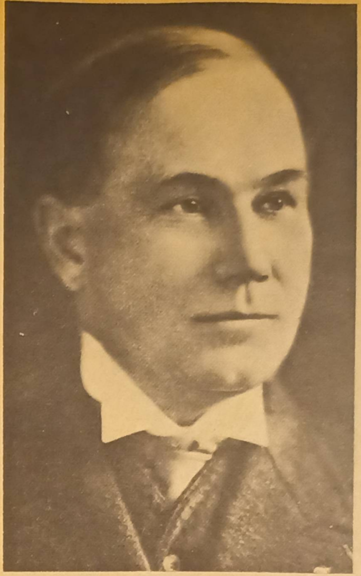
After a few futile curlew races the hound pups got wise. The same held true for the fruitless jackrabbit chases. Another thing, as long as I'm on the subject: Those days before the coming of the homesteaders and barbwire, before the dry land farmers plowed up the sod, there were large prairie dog towns sometimes a mile or more in circumference. High earth mounds surrounded the entrance holes to the prairie dogs' network of underground tunnels, with a dog perched on each mound, the younger ones running back and forth between the mounds, playing games. The prairie dog had a sharp, shrill bark. Often when a stray coyote approached a dog town, a chorus of alarm filled the air.

The barking of the prairie dogs, the crazy yapping of a coyote pack, the mournful howl of a lone wolf baying at the moon, all were sweet music for the lonesome ears of a drifting cowhand.

But let a pack of half-grown hound pups approach a prairie dog town, the young dogs, sounding alarm, would scamper for their holes, with the pups running around in lunatic circles until the prairie dogs went underground. The pups would be winded, their lolling tongues dripping moisture, but confident in their puppy minds that they had won a bloodless victory over the barking prairie dogs by sending them underground forevermore.

There would be an average of eighteen growing pups around the ranch and prowling the high willow thickets along both banks of Beaver Creek. Big lubberly, tail-wagging pups.

THE SUN was still high when we reached the sheep camp on Wild Horse Creek, which was littered with sheep carcasses. Wallace asked Fatty Jones, the sheep boss, how many wolves there were but Fatty didn't know for sure. He said his Swede sheepherder, who couldn't speak English, had held up his hand with the fingers spread wide. "Doggies," he'd said. "Wild doggies. Big doggies."


Dr. George Clay shortly after he came to practice in Malta, Montana.

Fatty Jones said he found wolf sign on the muddy creek bank, and according to the paw marks they were big timber wolves, probably four of them.

As we traveled in a southeasterly direction towards the badlands in the Larb Hills, Wallace said the wolves would be traveling on full bellies and that would slow them down a little. Wise from experience in the habits of wolves, Wallace was guided by a hunter's instinct. Silent now, his puckered eyes restless, we topped out on a long ridge and stopped. Through powerful binoculars Wallace viewed the country below, while the hounds lazed in the shade of the sagebrush.

The ridge we were on overlooked the place where Wild Horse Creek met Big Warm Creek at the old roundup crossing. The high water and wind erosion had formed steep cutbanks with a hollowed out overhang. The coulees were filled with high buckbrush and kinnikinnick bushes, all visible to the naked eye.

Wallace could see where the tall grass under a twenty-foot-high cutbank was flattened out where the wolves had dragged the sheep carcasses, and it was there he said we would jump our first wolf. So we circled around to a long draw that led down to the creek. There was a slight breeze blowing and we were downwind, which was in our favor.

It was Don, with his mastiff nose, who first caught the wolf scent. The hounds had been following our horses but now Don shot past and the rest followed him. The sound of our loping horses must have alerted the wolf who came out from the shelter of the cutbank, trotted up to the top and skylined himself, standing motionless about 300 yards distant. He watched us for a brief moment, then was off and running, headed for the open prairie, with the hound pack in pursuit.

Wallace's horse was jumping high clumps of brush, traveling in a straight

(Continued on page 43)

Malta, Montana's Anex Saloon where Doc Clay patched up the author's wounds suffered during a severe mauling by Bonnie, a Siberian boarhound.

Courtesy Montana Historical Society

THE ANEX
ALOON

THE FRENCHMEN'S COLORADO GOLD

By MAURICE KILDARE

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Treasure Mountain, believed to be the site of the Frenchmen's fabulous gold mines, near Summitville, Colorado.

ANY LOST treasure is a nebulous thing—a spiderweb. Not a few are of such nebulosity as to be past credibility.

The story of the Louisiana Frenchmen in Colorado has been told and retold as American folklore for nearly two centuries. Numerous versions of it have related just what happened and when. Each yarn was more than enough to create skepticism in even the most optimistic, but the rumors persisted. Three hundred Frenchmen buried five million dollars in gold bars and then conveniently got themselves killed or died. Thus they left hopeful treasure hunters *the* golden hoard supreme.

That much gold would be worth more than twice that sum today. It is certainly a great fortune to shoot at and undoubtedly, since it actually does exist, it is the largest buried treasure hoard on the North American Continent. This is true despite all the Lost Dutchmans, dozens of Lost Montezuma treasures, and that of Gran Quivira—none of which, in my opinion, ever existed outside of fantastic fables anyway.

Occasional items on the Frenchmen's gold have appeared in history books, old newspapers and in supposedly *true* accounts of men who knew and related the astounding facts. Through the years my file of such data has gradually thickened, and it represents considerable word foolishness.

Far too much gold. And before 1800, who could possibly have recorded anything about it other than the Spaniards of New Mexico? Only recently one thin item came to light in an old Spanish document. Not of the gold but actually substantiating the fact that some of the Frenchmen appeared in Taos. Moreover, there is a record that three actually survived to reach St. Louis. This expedition of Frenchmen was organized in New Orleans, went up the Mississippi River to St. Louis before Missouri was ever dreamed of, and then across the plains into Colorado. The men went directly to this fabulous gold mine, got out the almost-pure gold ore, extracted and melted it into bars. But the one particularly sticky question in all the several hazy versions of the Frenchmen's gold was how they could have gone directly to such an undreamed-of rich gold mine? One single recorded historical fact solves the puzzle.

Three hundred adventurers could have lived very well on five million dollars but the treasure would never reach Paris!

AS early as 1706 the Spaniards of New Mexico were warned of a French invasion in the offing. Even before that, French traders, explorers and trappers had been coming south from Canada and up from New Orleans into the Middle West and on into the Rocky Mountains. In 1719 it was reported to Spanish Governor General Valverde that 6,000 French soldiers were at the Far Quarter on the Arkansas River preparing to invade the Rio Grande settlements. However, upon investigation no such force was discovered.

The few Frenchmen who were penetrating into lands claimed by Spain seem to have given the Spaniards a French psychosis. This was evident when, in July 1739, a party of eight arrived in Santa Fe, almost naked, unarmed and starving. They were led by brothers, Pierre and Paul Mallet. Only the brothers were Frenchmen; the rest were French-Canadian half-breeds, or so they claimed. Thrown into jail, they asserted they were Indian traders who had first gone into what later became Illinois, then ventured west under repeated Indian attacks. Everything they owned—supplies and livestock—had been stolen and they had turned south seeking help to remain alive.

After nine months' imprisonment, the viceroy in Mexico City ordered them released and supplied. On May 2, 1740, the party headed by the Mallet brothers departed eastward through La Glorietta Pass, making their way across the Great Plains to the Mississippi River and down to New Orleans by boat. That they went

Summitville, Colorado in the 1880s. Most of the expeditions seeking the Frenchmen's lost gold on nearby Treasure Mountain set out from this town. Summitville today is about midway and just north of a line between Pagosa Springs and Alamosa in south-central Colorado.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Courtesy Rocky Mountain News, Denver

Headwaters of the San Juan River in Colorado just below Wolf Creek Pass. In this vicinity the bewildered Frenchmen cached $5 million in gold bullion. Below, South Mountain mines at Summitville, Colorado in the 1880s.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

to New Orleans instead of to Canada remained unknown to the Spaniards in New Mexico. Much less did they know that the party had been hunting valuable minerals across the plains into the Rocky Mountains.

In the San Juan Range the Mallets actually had found a fabulous ledge of almost pure gold. They took out a considerable amount of this valuable mineral, intending to return across the wilderness to New Orleans. It was then that the Indians hit them, killing six of the original party and leaving the remaining eight with nothing but their lives. Yet somehow, despite harrowing privations, they managed to make it south to Santa Fe where they knew the nearest help to be.

Back in New Orleans the Mallet brothers drew a detailed map of their gold find and wrote a complete description of their adventures. They advised that it would take many animals and a large force of armed men to enter the mountains, mine the golden wealth, and bring it out safely. Not only would the Indians have to be fought off, but the mine was in Spanish territory. If discovered, soldiers and Indian allies would attack them from New Mexico.

France and England were scrapping almost continually, warfare which was extended into the New World. Because of these unsettled conditions no attempt was made to go after the gold from New Orleans. Then worsening the situation, France in 1763 gave possession of Canada to England, and Louisiana west of the Mississippi River (the drainage, whatever that was) to Spain.

EVENTUALLY the international turmoil affecting the New World settled down. By 1790 a number of Frenchmen in New Orleans who had bided their time were ready to make the great adventure for the gold in Colorado.

The greatest secrecy covered the organization of the 300-man expedition, for the Spaniards would certainly arrest them all. In this group were skilled miners, geologists, mineralogists, assayers, laborers, soldiers, and former French army officers who had elected to remain in New Orleans.

Nothing is known of the Mallet brothers in connection with this second expedition. Posing as traders, the party went north to St. Louis. There the final supplies were acquired. The well-armed force had no difficulties with Indians, and arrived in what is now Colorado, entering the Ute-claimed country of the San Juan Range via what became known as Wolf Creek Pass. Their destination was what is today called Treasure Mountain near Summitville, Colorado.

Thanks to the Mallet brothers' map no time was lost in locating the golden ledge. Neither was much effort wasted on the log cabins constructed for quarters and defense. They were very crude shelters.

The Frenchmen went to work mining. As some extracted the rich ore from the steadily extended diggings, others crushed and recovered the gold. Assayers melted it into small bars for easy hand-

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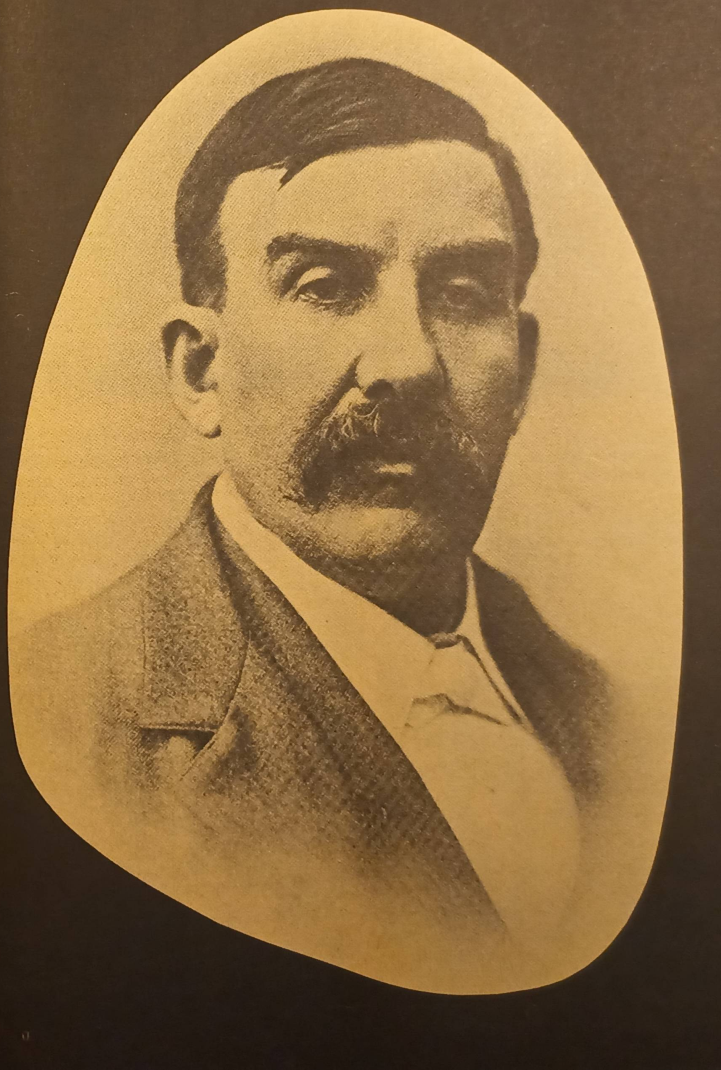
A TIP OF THE HAT TO SAM DAVIS

By CELESTA LOWE

Photo Courtesy Author



WHEN SAMUEL POST DAVIS died, his fellow journalists around the nation memorialized the man and his work in glowing terms, but they all seemed to apologize a little because he was less famous than some of his contemporaries.

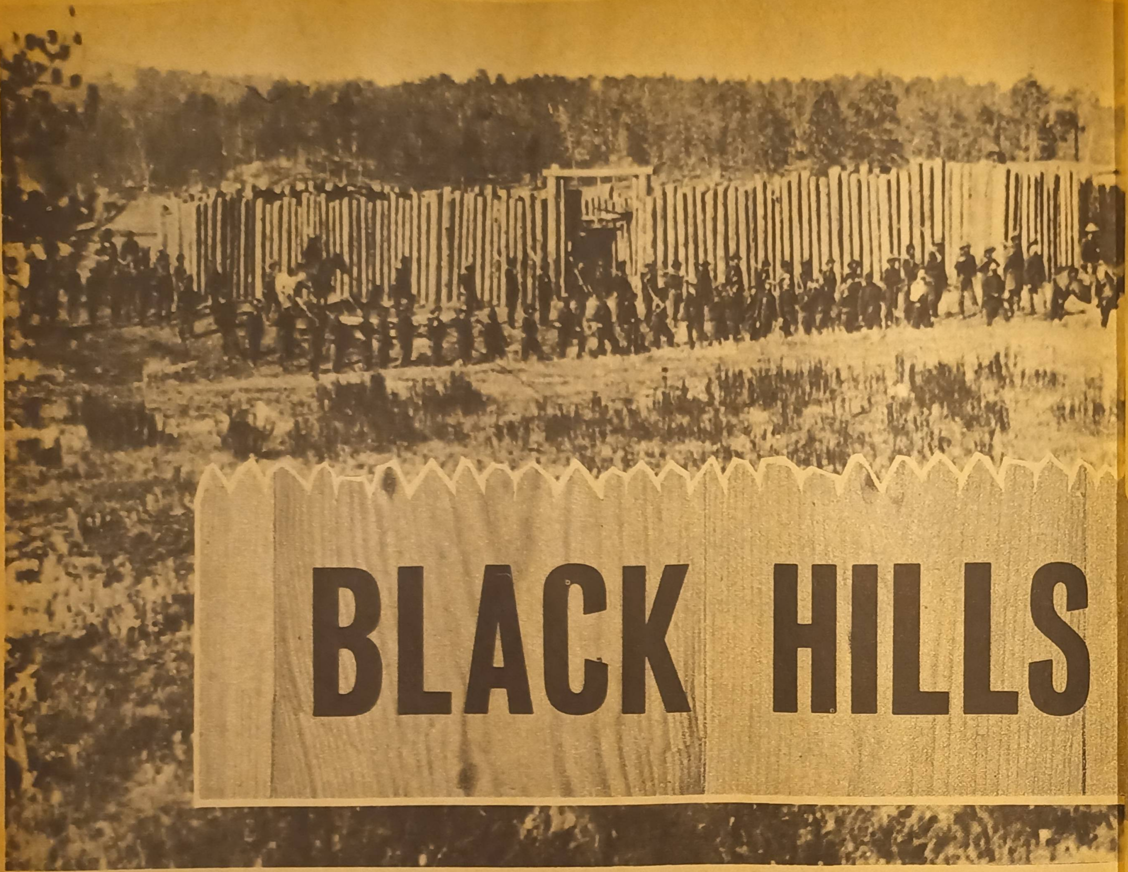
Sam Dunham, editor of the Tonopah-Times *Bonanza* and life-long friend of Sam Davis, put it this way: "Sam Davis was one of the few humorists who laughed at his own quips. Sam, our Nevada Sam, was not a wit, for wit hurts like a lash and Sam never hurt anybody or anything. He did not live among material things, anyway, but existed in a hall of dreams, the walls of which were hung with visions. He laughed only at beautiful things, never at the misfortunes of others. Sam Davis developed a number of grave faults as he laughed his way through this world. He forgot his duty to himself. His brother Bob, himself not greatly more talented, amassed a fortune from his magazines, but Sam simply scribbled a few quatrains or a little sketch occasionally and was content. He nearly always failed when he attempted anything the world calls practical, but that was the hall mark of genius. Sam, you were good. You laughed. You made other people laugh, and as they laughed they grew better in body and purer in spirit."

Another writer ended an obituary by saying, "He was also the editor of a history of Nevada." This was one of the few references to the monumental two-volume work which is the real memorial to Sam Davis. It has become the standard reference guide for ghost town enthusiasts, bottle hunters, rock hounds, political researchers, history buffs, and anyone else who seeks authentic information about early Nevada. Perhaps Sam Davis preferred anonymity, since he was an unassuming man, seldom signing his full name on articles, if signing them at all.

When Mark Twain, Rollin Daggett, Dan deQuille and Sam Davis were reporters for editor Joseph T. Goodman on Virginia City's *Territorial Enterprise*, Joe acted as a sort of literary foster-father to them and they were encouraged

(Continued on page 48)

He was really a very great guy even though, as a contemporary put it, "He nearly always failed when he attempted anything the world calls practical."



Courtesy Morrow Collection, University of South Dakota Museum

Troops passing the Gordon Stockade, first habitation in the Black Hills. The shelter was erected on French Creek in 1874 by the Collins-Russell Expedition (also known as the Gordon Party).

BLACK HILLS STOCKADE

The lives of twenty-six men, one woman, and a boy depended on eighty square feet of pine logs

By MILDRED FIELDER

Photos Courtesy Author

IN 1883, nine years after the Collins-Russell party had entered forbidden territory to search for gold, Tom Quiner told his niece, Laura Ingalls Wilder, of his experiences at the Gordon Stockade in the Black Hills of Dakota Territory. He and his friends had driven their ox teams across the plains and the Badlands in the cold of winter.

According to Mrs. Wilder: "They had been traveling 78 days when they made their last camp on French Creek. Here they cut pine logs from the hills, and built a stockade eighty feet square. They chopped the logs thirteen feet long and set them upright, tightly together, sinking the bottom ends three feet into the ground. It was hard digging, the ground being frozen."

Quiner described the fort in detail. The group lived through the bleak dark days by shooting game for food, trapping furs for warmth—and in the spring they found gold, "Nuggets of it, and rich gold dust in the frozen gravel and under the ice in the creek beds."

All would have been well if the Indians had not attacked them. Their fort kept them safe from the arrows, but the Indians gave every evidence of a plan to starve them to death by keeping them from hunting.

"So we cut down rations and tightened our belts," said Quiner, "to hang on as long as we could before we had to kill our ox teams."

The original Gordon Stockade (near Custer, South Dakota) rotted to near collapse some years ago, but it represented such sheer adventure that it has been restored as a permanent tribute to intrepidity. It was built originally in the frigid winter of 1874 shortly after General George A. Custer had blazed the way into the Black Hills with his military expedition from Fort Abraham Lincoln in Dakota Territory, after his miners had found gold on French Creek.

It was a time of yeasty excitement in the West. The prairie land of the great plains area was a frontier scarcely settled. Immigrants, fur traders, and soldiers vied with the Sioux for the land. The Black Hills were owned by the Sioux, regardless of Custer's exploration in their environs, and as such were forbidden to white men.

Nevertheless, in Sioux City, Iowa, newspaper editor Charles Collins was secretly organizing a caravan to the Black Hills, aided by frontiersman Thomas H. Russell. In answer to Collins' letters, twenty-six men, one woman, and a boy signed for the trek, the woman and boy being Mrs. Annie D. Tallent and Robert, wife and son of D. G. Tallent of the gold-seeking party.

THEY left Sioux City October 6, 1874, traveling in six covered wagons drawn by oxen. John Gordon was elected leader of the group, and the train continued through the Nebraska area and then north toward the Black Hills. In hostile country, traveling against the law and in danger from the Indians, they used extreme caution in every way.

The weather became colder as they traveled. When water was scarce on the prairies they loaded chunks of ice from White River to carry with them. They passed through the Badlands, an eroded area which prompted Mrs. Tallent's amazed description: "Language is inadequate to describe the utter desolation of the country through which we passed. Long ranges of hills, cut up by a perfect labyrinth of ravines or gorges into all sorts of fantastic shapes, into various architectural forms, resembling fortresses, castles, and even small villages, confronted us on every hand. . . . Numerous evidences that we were traveling over a region that had at some time in the dead past been the bed of an ocean were discovered; pieces of fossil bones, and petrified shells of various kinds and large size, lay scattered over the surface, some of which we gathered."

Shortly thereafter one of their members, Moses Aaron, sickened and died. They buried him on the prairie and continued.

On the last day of November they could see the black streak of forbidden ground in the distance. Doggedly they plodded toward it, and on December 9 they entered the Black Hills four miles below the present town of Sturgis. A howling snowstorm greeted them, but they found Custer's trail and followed it to the site of his so-called "Permanent Camp" at French Creek where gold colors had been found.

It was winter by that time. Now they needed protection instead of gold. For the next two weeks the men worked on the cabins and the stockade, building a fortress of heavy pine logs thirteen feet long set close together vertically three feet into the ground. The stockade was eighty feet square. Bastions were built at the corners standing six feet from the walls whose portholes were placed at intervals of eight feet for shooting at marauders. Within the stockade seven log cabins were made ready for occupancy.

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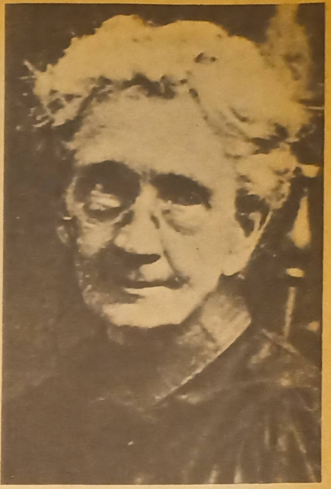


Annie D. Tallent accompanied her husband on the 1874 expedition, thus becoming the first white woman in the Black Hills.

Ten members of the Russell-Collins party gathered for a group portrait, most likely before the expedition departed Sioux City, Iowa.

Courtesy Seaton Publishing Company

Front of the restored Gordon Stockade near Custer, South Dakota in 1966.

CABIN OF
ANNIE D. TALLENT
THE FIRST WHITE WOMAN
IN THE BLACK HILLS 1874

Annie Tallent's cabin inside the restored Gordon Stockade and an old wagon outside the wall, both in 1966.

EVEN while building was in progress the eager men found moments to pan gold in French Creek. There were colors to be found, without doubt. When the cabins were finished the men gave their full attention to prospecting. A rocker was made to find gold in larger quantities, and by the end of January they had a fair showing.

John Gordon and Eaf Witcher were selected to take some of the gold dust back to Collins to prove that a strike had been made. Gordon and Witcher made it back to Sioux City, but when they tried to organize a second expedition to join the party in the Black Hills they were stopped by soldiers.

In the stockade, the adventurers saw winter disappear and the early days of spring arrive to soften the rigors of their existence. The men worked the streams happily, daily finding gold in their pans. On February 14 Charles Blackwell and Thomas McLaren left for Fort Laramie. They never came back. Four more men left on March 6—Newton Warren, Red Dan McDonald, J. J. Williams, and Henry Thomas.

April opened with a heavy snowstorm, and before the storm had cleared four men rode into camp. Two were government troopers and two were Williams and McDonald, pressed into service by the militia to lead them to the Collins-Russell party. The prospectors were arrested as illicit trespassers in Indian lands and were given twenty-four hours to prepare to leave. Then the entire group was escorted to Fort Laramie and released with orders to stay out of the Black Hills.

By 1876, a treaty was made with the Sioux, and the Black Hills were open for settlement. The Tallent family returned that year to find the stockade in a bad state of repair. In contrast, a town called Custer had risen near the stockade and miners were exuberantly panning gold everywhere they could see. John Gordon had tried to sneak back into the Black Hills in 1875, as many others did, but he was stopped by military men. When the land was legal for whites, Gordon tried again, and this time remained, but the old stockade was no longer the center of mining activity.

New strikes were made at Hill City, then in Deadwood Gulch. The full swing of the gold rush headed for Deadwood and the northern Black Hills.

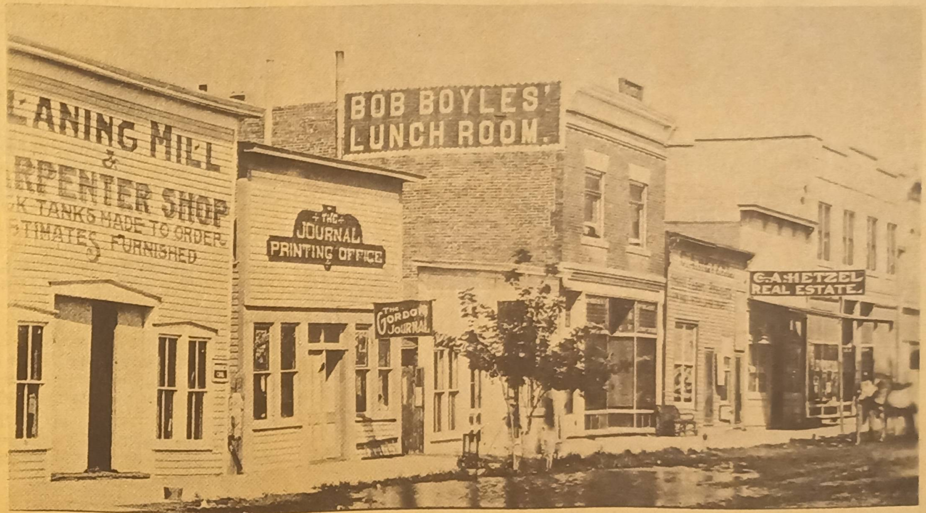
Today the Gordon Stockade is a reminder of a small group of pioneers who had the courage to try the unknown dangers of an unopened land. It was restored in 1925 as nearly like the original as could be done. Annie Tallent's cabin is marked by a sign in a corner of the stockade as the home of the first white woman in the Black Hills. The others are lined three on either side of the rectangle. Each cabin has a dirt floor, but is warmed by a stone fireplace. Only one portal leads into the enclosure, closed by a big double gate twelve feet wide and built of hewn timbers, surely strong enough to thwart the threatening Indians of 1874.

A wagon of the period is stationed outside the stockade. The creek is nearby. Are gold colors there still? Can you slosh water over the gravel taken from the creek bed? Would you recognize them—the tiny specks of gold dust?

Truly it is just not possible to visit the old stockade and not get caught up in the feel of yesterday's excitement—shivers from the danger of Indian attack; shivers from the prospect of sudden wealth.

Author's note: Quotations attributed to Laura Ingalls Wilder were taken from her book THESE HAPPY GOLDEN YEARS, Harper & Bros., New York, 1943.

Many Trails Led to Gordon



Courtesy Claire Hummel

Main Street in Gordon, Nebraska in the 1890s.

—but this Nebraska town probably never would have existed if a wagon-train headed for the forbidden Black Hills had not been put to the torch

By WILL SPINDLER

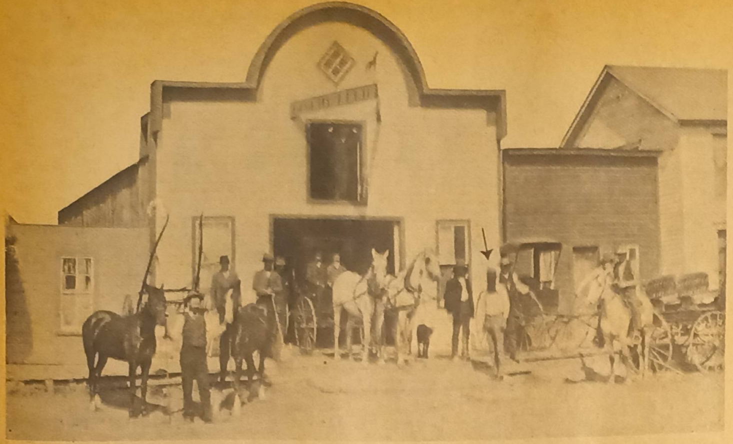
Photos Courtesy Author

ALTHOUGH Gordon in northwestern Nebraska's panhandle was established in 1884, its name derived from the notorious 1875 burning of the John Gordon wagontrain (about fifteen miles southeast of the present townsite) by U.S. troopers from Fort Sheridan.

Earlier, in October 1874, another wagontrain commanded by John Gordon had pulled out of Sioux City, Iowa secretly bound for the government-forbidden gold fields of the Black Hills in what is now western South Dakota. With it went twenty-five gold seekers, Annie D. Tallent, the only woman in the train, and her husband and their ten-year-old son. Mrs. Tallent, a well-educated woman, later was to become quite famous as the first white woman in the Black Hills, as well as a pioneer who accomplished much good.

Gordon's caravan entered Sioux territory on December 9, 1874, near the present site of Sturgis. But so slow was their travel by this time and so sorry their plight that it was not until December 23 that they reached the end of their long journey and went into winter camp on French Creek a few miles east of the present town of Custer in the very heart of the foreboding Hills.

By this time the storms of winter were upon them. In about two weeks the well fortified structure which became known as the Gordon Stockade was completed and ready for occupancy. Within its stout walls the Gordon party sat out the rest of that memorable winter, and what loneliness and misery must have been theirs at times in a desolate wilderness of mountains so far re-



Courtesy Claire Hummel

The Swegert, Herbert and Hummel livery barn on Gordon's main street in 1892. Man beneath arrow is believed to be Doc Middleton.

moved from the outside world!

As spring opened up, and the men began panning for gold in the sparkling waters of French Creek, their hopes were abruptly dashed when on the evening of April 4 U.S. cavalrymen suddenly appeared at the stockade with orders for them to vacate the Hills at once.

Most of the gold seekers drifted on to Cheyenne. The Tallents remained in Cheyenne until the next year (1876) when a treaty was signed with the Sioux which opened the Hills for white settlement. Had John Gordon and the more adventuresome of his original wagontrain members, together with many new recruits, had more patience and waited a few months longer before trying their second sneak trip to the Hills their story would have been entirely different, as they could have then entered the Hills legally. But not so. Fired with visions of gold, he and his band set out on their second trek in 1875, not too long after he had been expelled originally.

Proceeding through the lonely Nebraska sand hills along the south side of the Niobrara River, the ill-fated train had reached a point some fifteen miles southeast of present-day Gordon when it was intercepted by a detachment of troops from Fort Sheridan. The entire caravan was burned, the foolhardy band taken into custody, and Gordon himself jailed in Omaha.

When he was later released he promptly struck out for the gold fields, this time legally. His story had been played up in the Sioux City papers. Thus it was that when the first settlers arrived in that area in 1884 it was decided to name the new town after John Gordon.

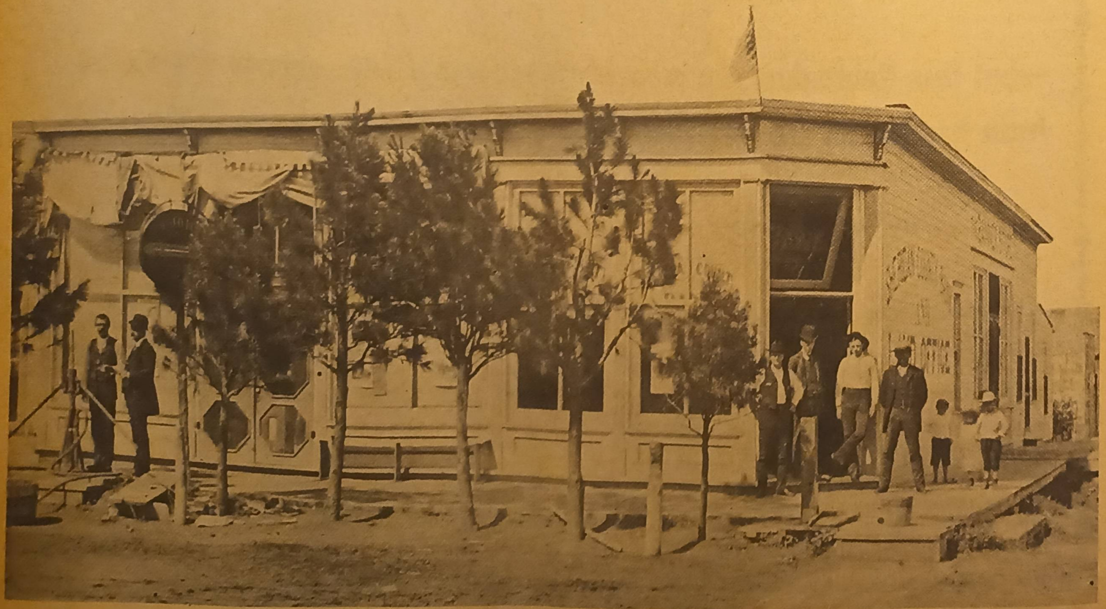
IN 1883 John A. Scamahorn, Civil War veteran and Methodist minister in Sullivan County, Indiana, came west because of failing health, and in Sheridan County in western Nebraska decided that his search was over. During the following year he piloted 104 persons to the present site of Gordon, his caravan consisting of fourteen wagons loaded with the essentials for building a new community on the barren plains.

The first tasks were to dig wells and plant gardens. Due to lack of trees it was necessary for some of the men to go to the Wounded Knee Creek country off to the northwest to get wood for fuel. The settlers had come to a halt only thirteen miles south of the newly established Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

The years which followed were hard, dreary and discouraging, with practically no crops produced during the first seven. But pulling up their belts a few notches more, most of the pioneers stuck. Land was cheap—only $14.50 for a quarter section and no taxes until the patent was issued at the end of five years. Even so, most men were so hard up by the time they received their patents that they had to mortgage their land to live.

Sam Joice's store (left) and the Sheridan County Bank and Land Office in Gordon about 1900, today the site of F&M Grocery.

Courtesy Claire Hummel



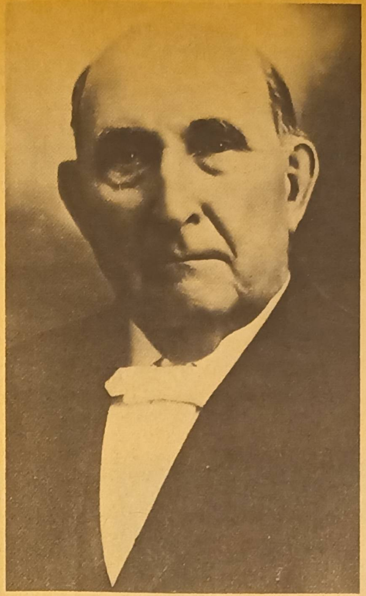
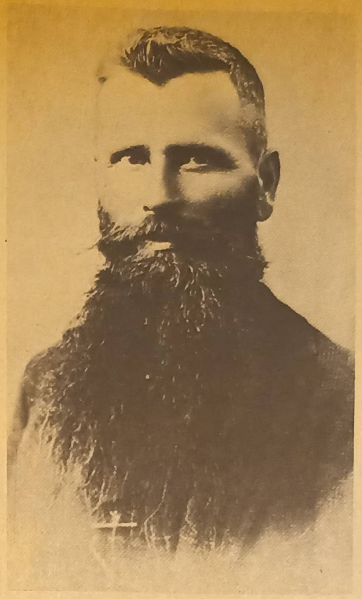


Photo by Purdy Studio

The Rev. John A. Scamahorn, founder of Gordon, Nebraska in 1884.



Courtesy Grace Hummel

Doc Middleton ran a small shanty saloon in Gordon for several years.

The first church service was held in front of the Rev. Scamahorn's tent. With his congregation squatting Indian fashion on the ground in front of him, he stood on the doubletree of his wagon to preach. At the close of his service, thirteen persons remained to organize the first Methodist church in Gordon.

Mostly sod houses were built that first year. Lumber for the floors, windows and doors had to be hauled from Valentine, then the end of the railroad and ninety miles to the east. A round trip took a week. To avoid the vast stretch of sand hills to the east, freighters used the hard ground country in Dakota for their trips, which made the distance farther but the pulling of loads easier. Mail was delivered twice a week.

Mules and horses were generally used for freighting, although some of the settlers had come in slower ox wagons. The earliest travelers to Sheridan County came by way of the tortuous Gordon trail which passed right through the sand hills. Later, as soon as it was discovered, travelers used the hard ground trails a short distance to the north in Dakota. The coming of the railroad to Gordon in 1885 made things much easier.

During the early days people traveled from place to place in the community on horseback, in wagons, and on foot. By 1900, however, quite a few sporty teams and buggies were seen around town though not yet in the sand hills. As late as 1915 Mrs. Beckler and George, Civil War dependents from New York who were homesteading on the Spade range in the sand hills, made their trips to the Jules Sandoz store over thirty miles south of Gordon on a cultivator! The children of Arthur Tucker, who later ran a hotel in Clinton, made trips to Jules' store with their dog Nig hitched to a child's wagon. Often Nig pulled a sack of flour and ten pounds of sugar the two miles to the family homestead. In winter, homesteaders would load their supplies on a child's sled pulled by a rope tied to the saddle horn on one of their ponies.

Cars were of little use until the advent of graded roads and even then they had to be stored away for the winter, when bobsleds were used. In fact, transportation in the deep sand hills was virtually unchanged for many ranchers and homesteaders until the coming of the private airplane.

ON NOVEMBER 19, 1885, the officials of newly-organized Sheridan County granted a charter to a small group of men qualifying as the first trustees of Gordon, which was still only a small village of tents and houses located on Antelope Creek near the eastern edge of the big new county. Although this date marks the official beginning of Gordon, the very first white inhabitants of the area had been the soldiers stationed at Fort Sheridan some fifteen miles northwest of the present town of Hay Springs. This military occupation extended from 1874 to 1881 and was intended to stabilize relations between the unpredictable Sioux nation and the expected white settlers.

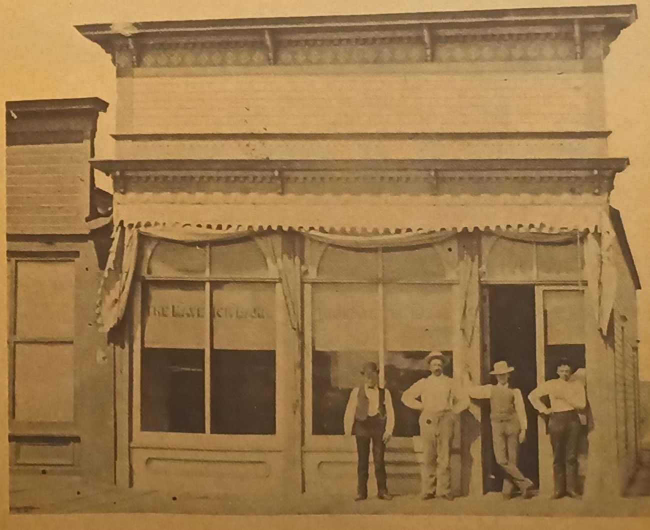
During the 1880s many huge open-range ranches were established, one of the primary objects being to help supply cattle for government issue to the Indians. The first ranch in Sheridan County was the Newman spread which was established in 1878 some twelve miles southeast of Gordon, with headquarters in Cherry County. Dave and Bob Hunter also began their big open-range ranch that same year. The ranches ran from 30,000 to 50,000 head of cattle each and had things pretty much their own way.

It was during a winter blizzard on the Newman ranch not long after its establishment that many of their cattle drifted with the storm far into the treacherous sand hills to the south. This country was considered unfit for cattle range, so the ranch had little hope for the survival of

(Continued on page 42)

Gordon's Maverick Bank in the 1890s, today site of the First National.

Courtesy Claire Hummel



THE MYSTERIOUS RAMMING OF THE PACIFIC

What sort of man could have given orders for full sail ahead that night, leaving hundreds to die at sea?

By T. W. PATERSON

THE VIOLENT end of the California steamer *Pacific*, only hours after she had cleared Victoria, B. C., November 4, 1875, is one of the worst marine disasters in West Coast record. It is also one of the strangest.

Today, almost a full century later, her loss is vividly remembered because, as she went down, the sturdy vessel which rammed her mysteriously sailed on—leaving hundreds of men, women and children to perish.

Much reference has been made to this tragedy in recent years, but the original puzzle remains. *How*, even in the perilous age of sail and steam, could such a horror occur?

An important factor was the *Pacific* herself. Said the Victoria *Daily Colonist*: "Built about 25 years since to supply a sudden demand for shipping in the California trade, she was not considered a safe boat 17 years ago when Captain Wright ran her in the Oregon and Vancouver Island trade; and steamers, it is well known, do not, like wine, improve with age.

"We earnestly hope that as this terrible visitation has sealed the doom of nearly 100 [*sic*] human beings it will also mark the close of the era of 'floating coffins' and 'rotten tubs' in the North Pacific. It is appalling to reflect that between a passenger and instant destruction there is but a thin plank. But when that plank is rotten as well as thin . . .!"

Few of the more than 250 who pressed aboard the ancient steamer could have appreciated her sorry condition. Families, miners, and Chinese workers lining her rails expected nothing beyond a safe, uneventful passage "below" to San Francisco. They probably did not even realize she was dangerously overloaded—some passengers even had climbed over the rail as the gangplank was removed.

S.S. Pacific wheezed from Victoria at 9:30 in the morning of November 4. That night she met her dreadful fate off Washington's Cape Flattery. But it was not until four days later that Vancouver Island learned of the calamity.

A special edition of *The Colonist* gave the few details then known. In a grim editorial, the saddened editor wrote: "The catastrophe is so far-reaching that scarcely a household in Victoria but has lost one or more of its members, or must strike from its list of living friends a face and form that found ever a warm greeting within their circle.

"A bolt out of the blue could not have caused more widespread consternation. In some cases entire families have been swept away. In others, fond wives . . . have gone down to an early grave. In others, the joyous, happy maiden; the sweet, innocent prattling babe; the banker, the merchant, the miner, the public officer—all have found a common grave."

The *Pacific* had struggled by Tatoosh Light late in the afternoon, fighting a heavy swell and strong wind. Six hours later, when the collision occurred, the tired coaster was but twenty miles from shore.

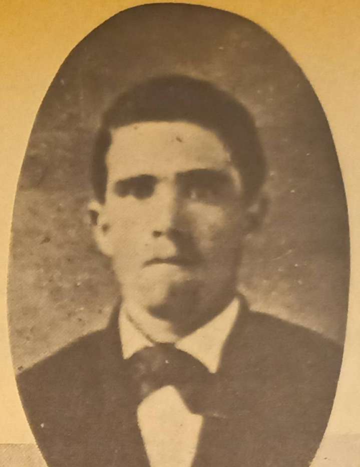
MOST passengers were asleep when the crash sent them crowding on deck. One of the survivors, quartermaster Neil Henley (or O'Henly), had finished his watch at 8 p.m. and retired below, when the *Pacific* shuddered under impact. Jumping from his bunk, he found the hold already flooding. He charged topside to find the deck a nightmare of chaos and panic. As Henley helped launch a lifeboat, someone pointed out a large sailing ship off to starboard, saying it had glanced *Pacific* in passing.

The first lifeboat splintered against *Pacific's* hull, crushing a baby which had been placed in the craft by its mother, and drowning the other occupants.

Henley leaped into the second boat with twenty-one others, mostly women. But so many had crammed in, the boat could not be rowed. A wave slammed her against the ship, and she filled instantly. Striking out on his own, Henley swam to a skylight which capsized upon his touch, then fought his way to the steamer's floating hurricane deck. When he looked back, the ship had disappeared. Already clinging to the crowded raft were Capt. J. D. Howell, Second Mate A. Wells, a cook, another quartermaster, and three passengers, including a woman.

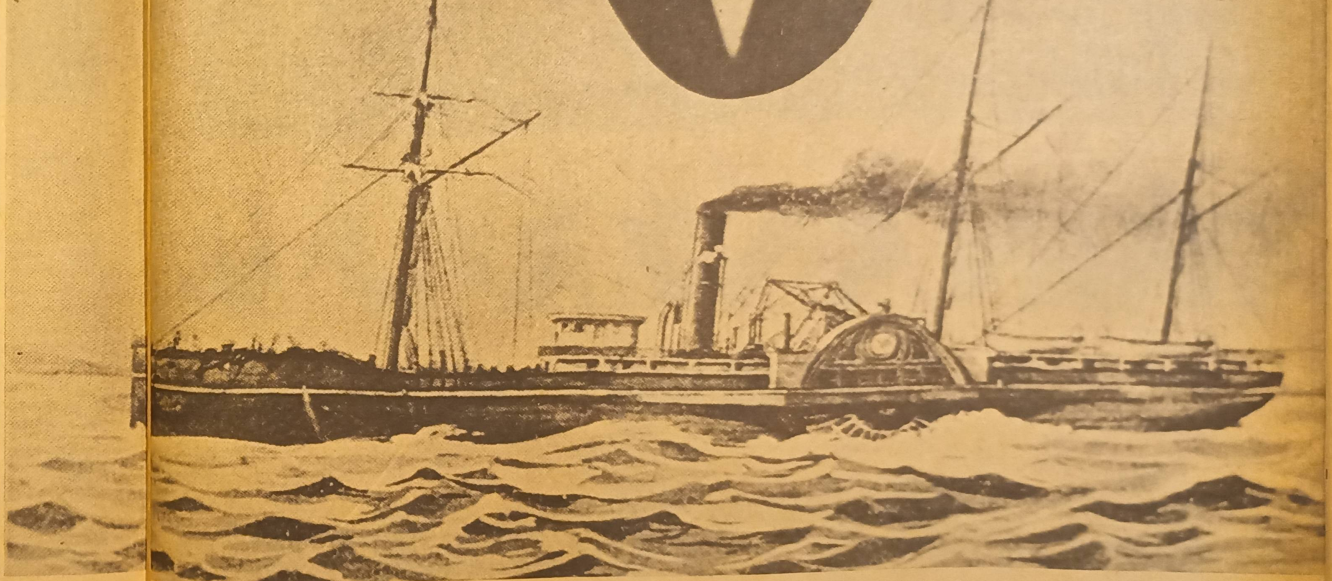
Capt. Howell had had an exciting career. Brother-in-law of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, he had been imprisoned with his famous relative after a gallant role in the Rebel army. Later returning to sea, he had skippered several coastal steamers. Shortly before his last command, his ship *Los Angeles* had wrecked off Tillamook Head. After "encountering unnumbered perils, he reached the land and brought intelligence of the disaster to Astoria."

Now he and his drenched companions shivered on their tiny float. *Pacific* was gone; no lifeboats were to be seen. Screams of the drowning haunted them in the darkness. Then—silence. The phantom ship which had struck *Pacific* her death blow sailed on in the night.



Courtesy San Francisco Maritime Museum

Quartermaster Neil Henley (or O'Henly), one of the two survivors from the S. S. *Pacific* (below), which sank off the coast of Washington State in 1875.



Victoria, British Columbia Provincial Archives Photo Courtesy Author

They were alone. Within hours, the sea began to steal Henley's comrades, one by one. By dawn, November 5, the hurricane deck was awash, each wave tugging at the survivors' weakening grip. Suddenly a larger sea swept away Capt. Howell, Wells, the lady, and one of the male passengers. Now there were four. Hours later, the cook died and slipped off into the sea.

More hours passed, the hardships increasing with every minute. Late that afternoon, the fog cleared, revealing land about fifteen miles distant. By the morning of November 6, Henley was alone. He had just enough strength remaining to snag a drifting box and haul it aboard his raft. The tiny windbreak allowed him to sleep fitfully.

EARLY IN THE MORNING of November 8—four horrifying days after the disaster—Henley was picked up by the revenue cutter *Oliver Wolcott*. The haggard seaman suffered from exposure, shock, hunger and exhaustion. But he was alive.

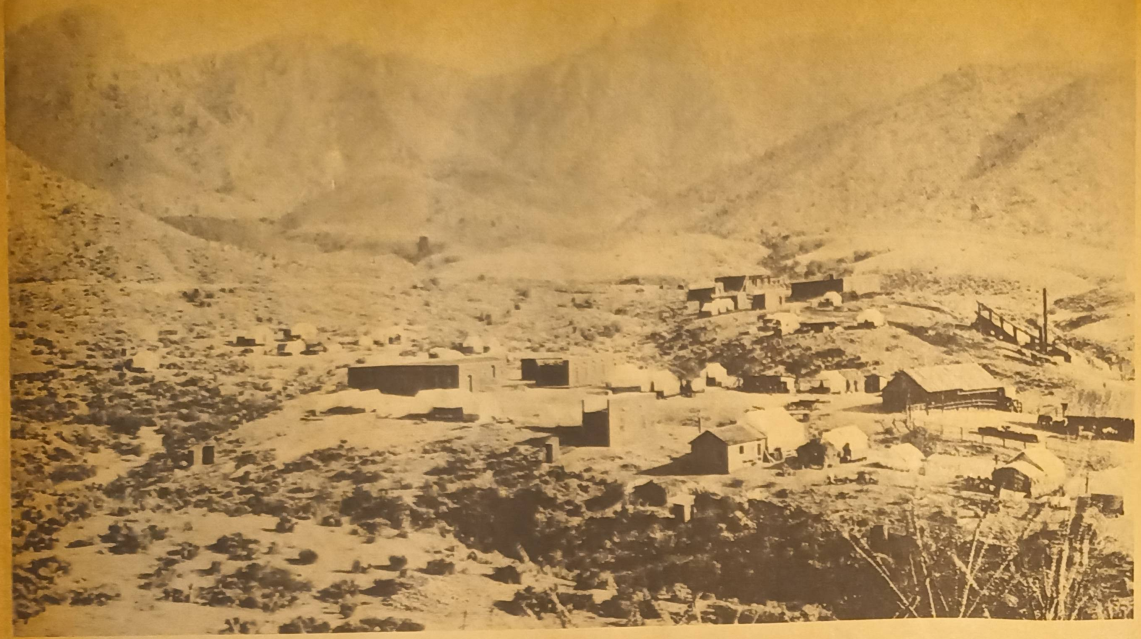
The only other survivor was passenger Henry F. Jelley, who had lashed himself to the *Pacific's* pilot-house which had torn loose when the steamer sank. Rescued two days later by the bark *Messenger*, he first said *Pacific* "struck a rock south of Cape Flattery." Rushed to port, he aroused the hopes of the crowds lining Victoria docks, anxiously waiting for word of missing relatives and friends. Jelley thought the two lifeboats had been safely launched.

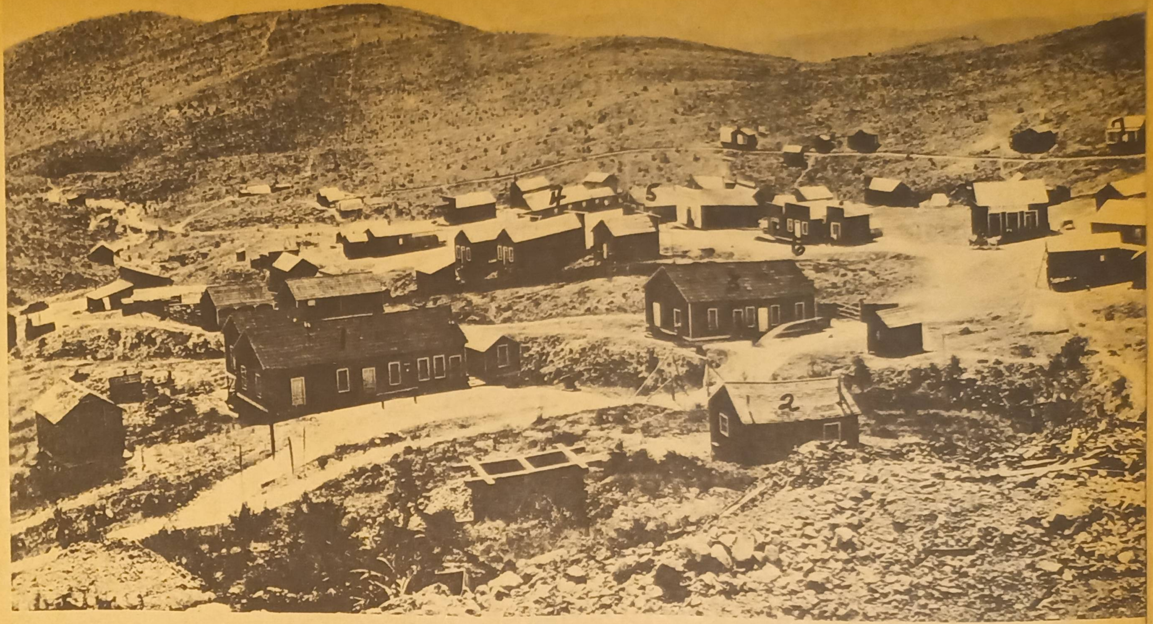
A rescue fleet immediately sailed to search for other survivors. Hundreds continued to wait and pray at dockside for information. When the steamer *Gussie Telfair* berthed in the evening of November 10, the pier was ablaze with lanterns and torches. The frantic crowds pressed forward, imploring those aboard for any news.

"We've got two men and a woman, dead, and no one else," a deckhand replied.

The Colonist reported: "It seemed as if all Victoria had gathered there to mourn. Before the boat was made fast the eager throng passed over the guards

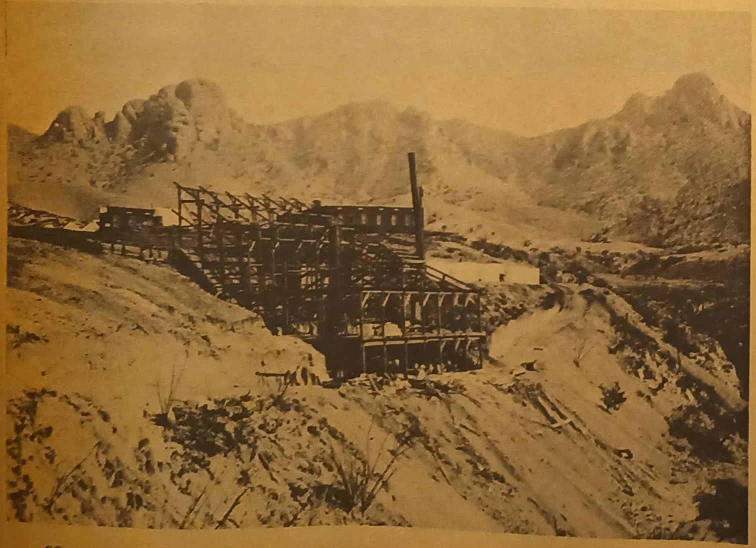
(Continued on page 47)





BONANZA in the SANTA RITAS

An addition to your list of ghost towns—Helvetia and Total Wreck!



By JAMES A. LONG

Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society
Photos Courtesy Author

"THERE were over a hundred houses—they were not much of a thing and made of bear grass. There were three saloons, made of frame, and an adobe Catholic church. I was about fifteen and looking for something to do, so I rented a well from a widow and hauled water two-and-a-half miles into town. I paid five cents a bag and carried two on a burro and sold them for fifty cents a burro-load, that made $3 a trip. Sometimes when the woman was not home I did not pay her anything. I made about $12 to $15 a day, sometimes more.

"Life was good, you got everything good. When you wanted a watermelon you went to a patch and ate all you wanted, and they did not let you pay. I also sold wood. I bought more burros and hired a Mexican to cut mesquite and load them on burros. Fifty cents a burro. I made good money. I did not stay because I got a job in a Tucson store. And the mines closed up not long afterwards, nohow."

Joe Kirby, one of the many who rushed to the rich new sites, left his account with a W.P.A. writer in the 1930s (now in the files of the Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society). The towns were Helvetia and Total Wreck; the area the southern part of Arizona Territory; the time the turn of the century.

According to Byrd H. Granger, in

Helvetia, Arizona (above) in 1901 looking east over town toward the Santa Rita Mountains. An ore smelter (left) was being built in Helvetia in 1899.

Total Wreck, Arizona (above) about 1885. Numbered buildings (several are uncertain) are: 1—Either a dining room and office or residence of Walter Vail; 2—assay office; 3—either a boarding house or residence of N. Vail; 4—boarding house; 5—a saloon or general store; 6—either the butcher shop or Billy George's saloon; 7—Edward L. Vail residence. The law in Helvetia was Marshal Tom Jones (right), shown about 1903.

Arizona Place Names, "It is thought that before the Civil War minerals were already being located in what later became the Helvetia area. In the late 1870s, L. M. Grover located the Old Dick, Heavyweight and Tallyho claims which, however, were not opened for development until 1881. In 1880, the first mine to be worked in the district was the Old Frijole, discovered by John A. Rockfellow while camped on the west slope of the Santa Ritas, and so called because Rockfellow considered frijoles the one thing necessary in camp. He suggested the mine might supply the beans and sow bosom for a while, and later sold the claim to John Weigle and William Hart. The group of claims in this region was obtained by the Helvetia Company of New Jersey in the early 1890s, under whose operation the community of Helvetia took shape."

Total Wreck, meanwhile, was growing in the Empire Mountains, a few miles east. Jerry Dillon, a cowboy, discovered a rich ledge there in 1879. Observing the whole mountain looked like a "total wreck" he hung that name on his mine. Jerry sold the claim in 1881 and the new Empire Mining and Development Company installed a seventy-ton mill.

Soon a town of considerable promise was collecting around the works. Walter Vail, who acquired the property in 1883, applied for a post office and told postal authorities they could either call the new town Total Wreck or jolly well keep their post office! Total Wreck became its official name.

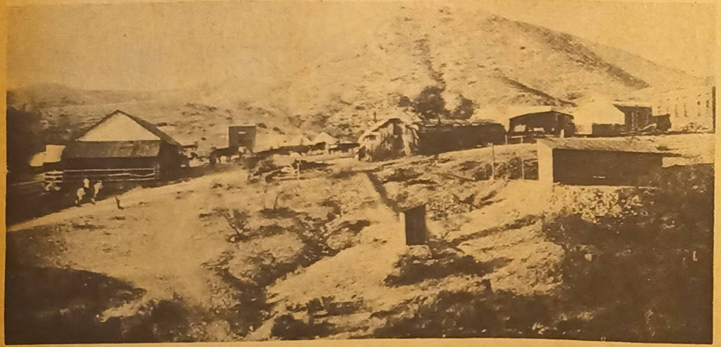
On June 12, *The Arizona Star* reported the new town "now has about fifty houses, three stores, four saloons, one brewery, a butcher shop, a lumber yard, and ten Chinese laundries." Nellie Cashman, that famous habitué of boom camps, opened a cafe in Total Wreck. Sometimes, when fun ran high, the cowboys shot out the lights in her cafe and also in the cafes of the Chinese.

The mill turned out two silver bars a day, each weighing 150 pounds, and that silver brought $1.25 an ounce in New York—an output of $6,000 a day. The old stamp mill, its 20 stamps each pounding with 950 pounds of force, stormed night and day.

Indians were a constant menace, and on one occasion a band of Apaches swooped down on a party of Mexican woodcutters and their French boss. After a short, bloody fight, "Frenchy" and four of his men were killed and fifteen mules driven off. Miners from Total Wreck buried the bodies in a tiny new graveyard.

(Continued on page 60)

In the author's 1964 photo below, Helvetia's condition contrasts sharply with the bustling camp of seventy years ago (middle photo). In Helvetia in 1900 (bottom), a survey crew included Mine Superintendent Seager (fourth from left) and a Mr. Close, general manager (sixth from left).



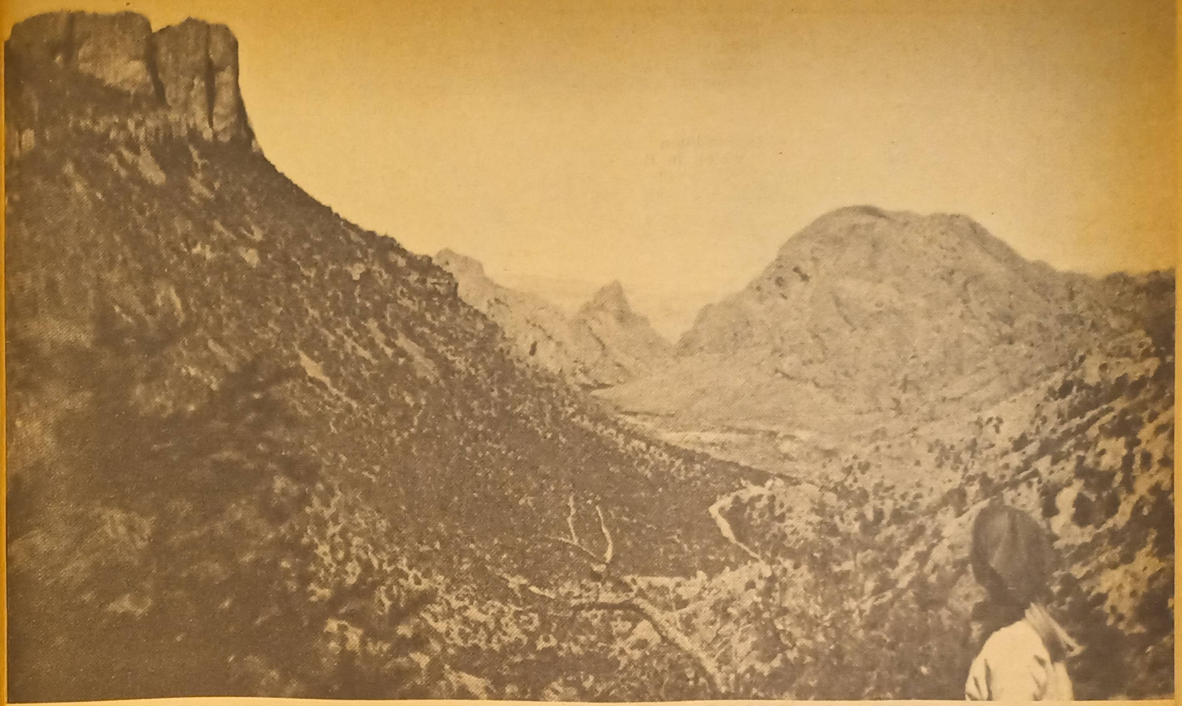


Photo by John Wallace

Rugged grandeur still may hide a fortune in gold at the bottom of a deep spring high in the Chisos Mountains in Big Bend National Park, Texas. Gideon Gaines' message found scrawled on bits of paper stuffed in a baking powder can near his skeleton has lured treasure-seekers ever since. The view above is from Lost Mine Trail in the Chisos, looking west. Casa Grande rises on the left, with the Basin and Window in the center background.

A RUSTY CAN'S MESSAGE

Here's a Special TREASURE STORY

By CAPTAIN JACK DECATUR MOORE

From Our 1941 FRONTIER TIMES

THE PLACING of the message in the baking powder can was probably the last gesture of a man who signed himself "Gideon Gaines." More than a quarter of a century later his bleached bones were found by two old-timers, Jason Flippin and Jefferson Breede. A short distance from the bones, they found the rusty can fastened in a growth of roots and rocks. After prizing off the lid they found a message scrawled in a loose coarse handwriting hardly legible. The sentences were broken, rambling, irrational; the spelling testified to the illiteracy of the writer; the handwriting, the letters poorly done and out of proportion, showed the writer to have been one seldom used to letter writing.

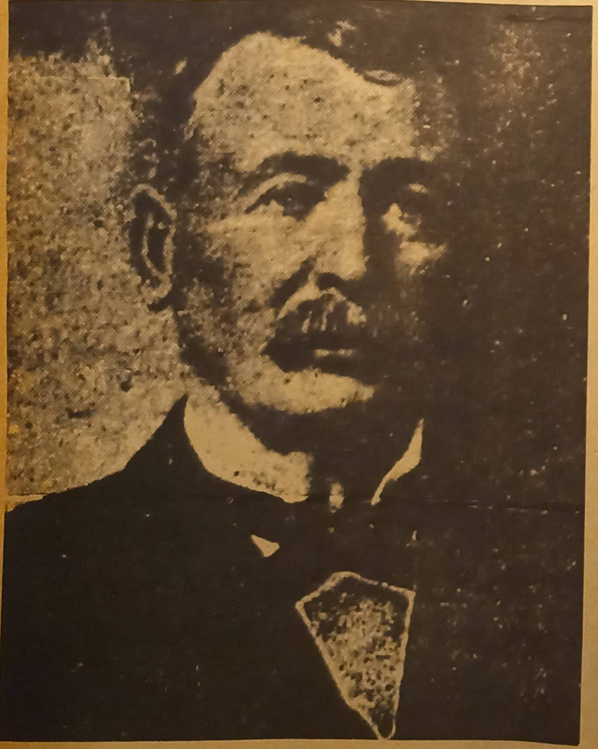
The message was written on scraps of coarse wrapping paper, and Jason Flippin, digging out a packrat's nest in an effort to recover more evidence, found a strip of lead, the kind used to run bullets in a mould for muzzleloading guns. The lead had been sharpened to a point, and in the same nest he found a large skinning knife with the handle gnawed and rotted. This piece of lead was evidently the pencil used to write the scrawled message. On the reverse side of one piece of paper containing several sentences was this brief statement: "Seen a white buffalo right close." The writer of the message had more than likely traveled in a circle, for on the back of another scrap containing the main message was this: "Found half of a snake an et it."

The scrawled sentences about the white buffalo may have been the wild imaginings of the sick mind of one suffering untold tortures from the loss of his scalp and slowly dying from hunger and the lack of water, yet in my wanderings through the Big Bend [of Texas] I have cut sign on the trail of that "white buffalo" story several times. One old and wrinkled Mexican—half Yaqui—of uncertain age, probably anywhere from ninety years up to a hundred, told me of having known the existence of a white buffalo in the high mesas of the Chisos (Ghost Range); and an old French scout and trapper, Ode Montelle, who had gone through three wars—the Texas Revolution, our war with Mexico, and the Civil War—who had been on the Rio Grande off and on since early youth, told me the same tale of "the white buffalo of the Chisos."

(Continued on page 42)

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Commercial Street in Trinidad, Colorado about 1917. Here Ricardo Lucero killed Frank West and later—after a long and arduous manhunt into New Mexico—stood trial in the slaying.



Courtesy State Historical Society of Colorado

Ed West, patriarch of the West family of Trinidad, Colorado and father of the man killed by Ricardo Lucero.

Go Bring Him In—PREFERABLY DEAD!

These words weren't spoken but they were implied. Why not save a trial and a hanging?

By MILTON W. CALLON

SHERIFF Patricio Sanchez of Mora County, New Mexico stared up from his desk in startled disbelief when the door to his office flew open and slammed against the wall. Swaying in the doorway was what seemed to be an apparition from a nightmare. The visitor's hair hung to his shoulders in a tangled mass of greasy, black strings. The left eye had a milky, paralytic cast and his shirt was open to his waistline, exposing three long, jagged, red scars criss-crossing a hairy chest. His mud-caked trousers were matted with cockleburs and his shoes were bloodsoaked ribbons of curled leather.

An interval of tense silence passed and then the parched, cracked lips of the "apparition" moved nervously to whisper, "I'm Ricardo Lucero!"

The mountain folk of Mora County had promised the surrender of Ricardo Lucero but Sheriff Sanchez was ill-prepared for this unceremonious capitulation. He watched the long-sought-for fugitive weave back and forth in the doorway. A flash of unmistakable panic in the man's one good eye propelled the sheriff out of his chair.

"Here, *amigo*," said the sheriff, "sit down and I'll get you a cup of hot coffee."

"*Gracias*," Lucero mumbled as he was guided to a chair.

Lucero clutched the cup of coffee in his trembling hands and sipped slowly while the sheriff was flipping a wall calendar backwards from April 19, 1917. Ricardo interrupted the monthly recount with the terse verification, "Almost eight months, sheriff!"

LATER, after a hot meal and more coffee, Lucero told his story. He had been a sheepherder for Frank West of Trinidad, Colorado. He lived in a shack he had constructed from an old boxcar near the railroad station at Delhi, a few miles east of Trinidad. Lucero told how Frank West had come to his place on the night of August 24, 1916 and questioned him about his decision to quit herding sheep on the West Ranch. He said that his employer was drunk, and when he (Lucero) swore that he would never work again as a sheepherder, Frank West became insanely angry and beat him to the floor. Still not satisfied, West raked him unmercifully across the chest with his spur. (At this point in the story, Lucero gestured vehemently to the scars on his chest.) Fearing for his life, Lucero managed to roll away from his assailant, regain his feet and lunge at Frank West with his pocketknife. The weapon pierced the heart of his attacker, who fell dead at Lucero's feet.

Frank West, twenty-five at the time of his murder, was the youngest son of Ed West, a pioneer resident and builder of the beautiful West Opera House in Trinidad, Colorado. Frank's murder by a "Mexican sheepherder" was prejudged by residents of Las Animas County as one of the most coldblooded crimes in the county's history.

Feelings ran high against Lucero throughout the area, but particularly in Trinidad where Frank's older brother, Harry, was an alderman. Harry West and his brother-in-law, Earl Cooley, formed a posse and the long search for Lucero began. Word spread rapidly that the posse preferred the fugitive dead, and if he surrendered he would be hanged without a trial.

It didn't take Lucero long to realize his precarious position, and before West's body was cold the murderer was on the run. He first stopped at the home of an aunt in Trinidad. He explained his predicament, ate a hot meal and fled into the night. Thus began one of the most relentless manhunts in the history of northern New Mexico.

RICARDO LUCERO had been reared in the mountain country west of Mora. He had many friends and relatives in that high country of hidden valleys and canyons and he felt that if he could get to the sanctuary of his mountain home, no posse would ever find him. Mora, by the flight of a crow, was 106 miles from Trinidad over some of the roughest and wildest country of New Mexico, and it was estimated that Lucero traveled over 125 miles to reach his sanctuary on foot. However, it is reasonable to assume that this figure was quite conservative.

In 1916, traffic was already too heavy over Raton Pass for a hunted man to travel without detection. He could not have climbed the mountain in any way resembling a straight line. Deep canyons and hogbacks had to be either traversed or sidetracked, and the going was rocky and brush covered.

Once this was overcome and Lucero was at the foot of the mountain on the New Mexico side, he had to skirt the eastern edge of the wooded foothills of the Cimarron. Before reaching the village of Cimarron, New Mexico, Lucero was recognized by a native and it became necessary for him to avoid the village where he had planned to obtain food.

From Cimarron to Mora, his original destination, the fugitive had a choice of going straight over the mountainous terrain or avoiding it by a circuitous route. The latter would expose him to a possible posse so the wooded hills were his best protection. Traveling night and day, Ricardo Lucero, with only the food he could scrounge from the land, arrived in La Cueva just a few miles south of Mora. His plans again were changed when he was recognized by another native. He slipped away to the south toward Ledoux.

He was welcomed at the home of another aunt who lived in the remote Cebolla Canyon near Ledoux. He was given refuge in a seldom-used cabin where he built a "blind bed" and then chose a dark secluded corner where he felt he could get some much-needed rest.

According to Lucero's story, it took him eight days to reach Ledoux, where he never left his hideout in the daytime from the time of his arrival in September until January 5, 1917. Pure luck or some fickle turn of fate caused him to choose January 5 for his first trip away from the cabin in the light of day. Had he remained secluded he would have been killed or captured that evening by a posse headed by Earl Cooley and Harry West.

NEWS HAD LEAKED OUT to authorities in Las Vegas, New Mexico that Lucero was hiding in the Mora Mountains and it was only a matter of deduction for them to figure out the exact location. West and Cooley came to Las Vegas and solicited the help of Sheriff

(Continued on page 62)

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

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WESTERN WANDERER

Campfires and Cattle Trails (Caxton, $2.95, paperback) presents the "recollections of the early West in the letters of J. H. Harshman," edited and discussed by Neil M. Clark. Harshman was born in Jacksonville, Illinois in 1858 and was sent to Colorado for a lung ailment at age 18. From 1876-1884 he worked as horse wrangler, cowboy, mail carrier, prospector, logger, railroad laborer, and wool and hide buyer. He covered Colorado, Texas, and New Mexico and was present—an unnoticed bystander—when many important events transpired. Clark asked Harshman to write to him and tell him of his experiences and impressions of the West he knew before settling down with Wells Fargo in Chicago. Thirty-two letters resulted, all written at Harshman's retirement "strawberry and chicken farm" near Palma Sola, Florida. Clark felt that too much of the early West was written about or by gifted or unusual people. Seldom was an "average citizen's" view known, let alone published. Harshman did not go West to make a fortune; he said, "I had the wanderlust." Harshman's letters ring with honesty and modesty and Clark has handled them expertly. An unusual and interesting addition to Western Americana.

KACHINAS AND CHIEFS

Dolls of the Indians, A Book of Kachina Effigies (A. S. Barnes & Company, $5.95) by Elsie V. Hanauer is a beautifully written and illustrated book on some of the religious ceremonies of the Hopi Indians. We learn that Kachina means spirit-father, a supernatural being who acts for good and evil throughout a Hopi's life. The men make the dolls out of cottonwood. There are over 200 different Kachinas, each with its individual name and spiritual character. Kachinas are not worshipped; some are friends and others have police powers to punish offenders. The author's handlettered text and artistically designed sketches give the book a unique style and class all of its own. Highly recommended.

Indian Chiefs of the West (Julian Messner, $3.95) by Felix Sutton is the author's eighth book for young folks. Five great chiefs were selected for the book. Sequoyah was an uneducated Cherokee who devised an alphabet and written language for his people. Crazy Horse gained fame by leading the Indians in the extermination of Custer on the Little Big Horn. Chief Joseph, statesman of the Nez Perce, led his people to war in desperation. Sitting Bull, valiant war chief who became a star attraction of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, was later murdered by reservation police at Standing Rock. Geronimo was a fierce warrior chief of the Apache. He led a reign of terror throughout Arizona Territory and Northern Mexico. In 1866 he surrendered and was shipped to Florida and later to Oklahoma. In 1904 Geronimo rode in President Roosevelt's inaugural parade. Geronimo was 76 years old at the time and died four years later.

INLAND EMPIRE

The Great Columbian Plain (University of Washington Press, $15.00) by Donald W. Meinig is an historical geography of the region covering the period 1805-1910. Like the larger Great Plains, the Columbian Plain was labeled as wasteland by early white men. Only after more humid lands farther west were occupied did settlers turn their attention to the grasslands. Nutritious bunchgrasses were turned under and wheat was planted on every tillable acre. Even wheat did not fare well until farmers learned the hard way that it took two years' moisture to grow one wheat crop. Once the fallow-system was perfected dependable yields were produced. The highly fertile soils in the Palouse were deep enough to produce fabulous wheat yields even while yielding a toll to erosion which would be disastrous in areas with thinner soils. Meinig, a native of the region, traces its history, development, changes, and people. Irrigation in much of the Columbia Basin tied the Plain to a much broader region and reduced its isolation; railroads and modern highways helping. Meinig's treatment is comprehensive. He describes the physical environment, international influences, the church colonization, early wealth in "gold, grass, and grain," transportation, and town and country. He recounts the role of science and practical experience in agricultural and land-use development—a process still unfolding. Photographs, maps, bibliography and index complete the 576 pages—the most useful reference available on the Great Columbian Plain.

SALMON!

It is difficult enough to manage "publicly owned resources" within one country to achieve both biological balance and economic growth benefit; it is impossible—or virtually so—to manage an international resource such as the salmon fisheries. *The Pacific Salmon Fisheries; A Study of Irrational Conservation* (Johns Hopkins Press, $6.00) by James A. Crutchfield and Giulio Ponecorvo is a scholarly report produced by Resources for the Future. The authors studied all aspects of the Pacific salmon fisheries—economic and biological issues, methods and fishing gear, the environment including attitudes and labor, development of the industry, regulations, and alternatives. Unrestricted entry into the fishery by several countries makes both regulated harvest and economic stability virtually impossible. Statistics, graphs, footnotes, and index make this a valuable technical reference for biologists, conservationists, and economists.

ANGLER'S AID

Lure Fishing (A. S. Barnes & Co., $8.50) by A. C. Becker, Jr. is a detailed book on lures and lure fishing. While no theory, lure, or method is fool-proof, Becker's book is sure to be of help to anyone interested in catching more fish. He discusses colors, plugs, spoons, plastic worms, jigs, combinations etc. He covers lure presentation, setting the hook and playing the fish. He even mentions tackle boxes and brands. The book is illustrated in mediocre black and white—some color would have made the book even better. Complete with index.

WESTERN "JUNK"

Relic Trails to Treasure (Old Time Bottle Publishing Co., $4.50) by Wes and Ruby Bressie in an interesting catalog of various Western relics together with a separate price guide. Everything from tobacco tins to Indian artifacts are covered. The content is by no means complete, but the articles are fascinating. Such articles may be trash to some, but are "treasure trash" to this reviewer, including old cowbells, horseshoeing tools, miners lamps, etc. A nice little paperback to have in the glove compartment just in case you run on to a promising little "junque" shop. Just hope you find something marked as reasonable as indicated in the price guide.

TRAPPER-EXPLORER

Stanley Vestal's biography of *Jim Bridger—Mountain Man* is now available in a handy size paperback republished by the University of Nebraska Press for $1.95. This is considered to be the best biography of Bridger who ranked high in the stalwart breed of pioneers which included Jedediah Smith and Thomas Fitzpatrick. Two images have been handed down about Bridger. A false one was hatched up by flamboyant writers who pictured him only as an illiterate bruiser, buffoon, and polygamous squawman. Vestal corrected these falsehoods and shows Bridger in his true stature as a superior guide, army scout and mountain man in an era when his outdoor craftsmanship was a boon to those he served. Some of his other credits include the discovery of Great Salt Lake when he was twenty, and opening of the overland route followed by the overland stage, Pony Express and Union Pacific.

DESERT LURE

Those interested in desert wayfaring should provide a ready market for *Under Desert Skies, Travels in the American Wilderness* (Barnes and Co., $7.50), by W. Phillip Deller. Illustrated with forty nifty photographs, and drawings of desert scenes, vegetation and wildlife, the text covers a wide range of subjects including distinctive species of desert vegetation, animals, birds as well as Indians and archaeology. The author describes the ecology of the desert climate and tells how it controls the interrelated plant and animal communities. He discusses man's relationship to the wilderness and voices disapproval of his blind neglect of this important natural resource. The last part of *Under Desert Skies* is a brief travelogue of the author's camping trips to Arizona and British Columbia.

PRESERVED FOR POSTERITY

It takes all kinds and *Truly American* (Old Time Bottle Publishing Co., $1.50) by Lynn Blumenstein wins the fur-lined trophy. This gem contains 1½ pages of explanation and 36 photographs, with pithy captions, of various outhouses and privies. While only those of us who have experienced cold seats on frosty mornings may appreciate this offering, it does preserve for posterity a record of a "genuine American structure."

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Letter Rip!

(Continued from page 4)

haired girl, and his warriors would bring the family wild meat they had killed. They, in turn, would share garden produce with the Indians. Just before the snowstorm came, the old chief and two of his warriors had started out to bring part of a deer they had killed to their white brother and found, on arrival, that the little girl was missing.

One hunter was sent out to the nearest town to spread the word, the other went back to the Indian village to bring more help, and the old chief remained behind with his white friends.

The snow had stopped falling when morning came and with it, the Indians from their village and then the men from the town arrived. Some were "bad men" the old man said. I suppose he meant they were wanted by the law for robbery or murder.

The Indian trackers were the first to find signs of the little girl—her small footprints in an old creek bed. Close behind were the tracks of a wolf. It was said by some of the men afterward that a big wolf was seen standing guard near the mouth of the cave where the little girl was found with her puppy clasped tightly in her arms and her golden curls falling over her sweet face.

If that were so, the wolf might also have been seeking shelter from the storm in the cave. The presence of the little dog might have kept him out. But why did he stay?

The old chief carried the little one and her pet outside, and someone fired three shots to let the other searchers in the area know they found the missing child. One by one they came back and marched silently behind the old chief and the father and so they all walked together to the house.

A dance hall girl had ridden out from town with some late-comers and she had brought with her a length of white silk. "I had a baby girl, but she died. I had bought the silk to make her some pretty dresses," she told them. And, once again she cut and fitted and sewed by hand another white dress for a little girl she never knew.

Somewhere there must have been a Catholic mission as the old man said there was no time to send for the priest to come for a funeral Mass. The Indians were Catholic. The men from town talked about how it "was not fittin' for a child not to have a proper funeral" and one of the gamblers came to the father and asked: "I have a Bible in my saddlebags, and if you didn't mind, I could read something from it and maybe, say a prayer?" No one did mind.

All looked in wonder as this man with his Bible in his hand walked behind the little homemade casket. From somewhere he had found a black suit and a white shirt and looked for all the world "like a sure enuf preacher."

He told them of a loving Jesus who always looked after His sheep, both black and white, and how much more the black sheep needed Him than the white ones. He told them of a home range enclosed in a big valley where all the sheep would be together someday. In closing, he told them of a beautiful garden—the most beautiful place in all of Heaven, where all the children were, and that there was always room there for one more "little white angel."

And everyone wept.

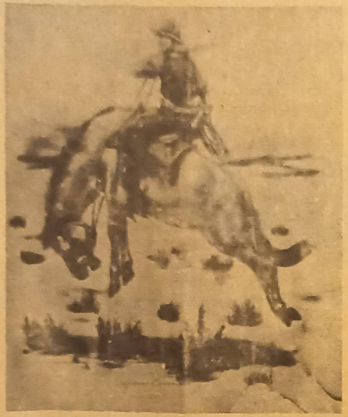
"Did you cry, too?" I would always ask.

"I sure did, little gal. It's something you never forget."

After the funeral was over, the man with the Bible mounted his horse and rode away into the sunset. He did not look back.—Mrs. Carmen Welch, 719 Sunset, Longmont, Colorado 80501

Who Painted "Montana Cowpuncher"?

This is a photograph of a painting which was sent to my father from Montana about 1915 or 1920. It's painted on what looks like a tanned sheepskin. There is no name on it, but the bottom right-hand corner has a piece torn out of it. "Montana Cowpuncher" is printed on the bottom. Maybe one of your readers has some information as to who might have painted it.—Harry Shriver, 1225 Fruitdale Drive, Brownsville, Texas 78520



Western Book Collectors, Hear This!

I know that a great many of your readers are collectors of books about the West, just as I am. However, it has often occurred to me that the guy over on the next block could very well share my interest and hobby and yet I might never be aware of it. Some sort of organization which would make us aware of each other is needed.

If any of your readers who collect Western Americana—or those who would be interested in starting a collection of books about the West—would write me giving their specific area of interest, I will get the ball rolling by compiling a list of all who write and mail a copy to everyone I hear from.—R. G. McCubbin, 544 Marthmont Way, El Paso, Texas 79912

Gunfight in Carpenter Creek

I won't tell you how old I am but I guess you could come up with a pretty good answer. I spent many hours with Charley Russell in the Mint & Silver Dollar Saloon in Great Falls, Montana. I also knew Matt Warner of the Wild Bunch in Price, Utah, but that is another story.

It would be of interest to me and others if there is anyone still around who remembers the fight between Kink Evans and Dutch Parker—both gunslingers. Kink Evans was killed. The year escapes me, but I believe it was in the early 1900s. The place was the old mining camp of Carpenter Creek, Montana. I was a muleskinner at the time. We had quite a celebration the day Kink was put away in Roundup, Montana—guess you would call it a wake. There were a lot of hard men in this camp at one time.—Stanley Limb, Box 192, Antioch, California 94509

Photos of Everest, North Dakota

I would like to hear from anyone who has any pictures taken before 1920 in or of the town of Everest, North Dakota.—F. E. Marek, Wheatland, North Dakota 58079

Little-known Texas Outlaws

I have had a question in my mind for years that I wish someone could answer. Before I ask it, I will relate an experience I had southeast of San Antonio, about 1908-1909. I was staying in a hotel in Beeville, I think. I met a man by the name of Butler, a likeable fellow about five-feet, four-inches tall, with black curly hair, dark piercing eyes and dark complexion.

We decided to rent a team of horses and a buggy and take about a week's trip into the country. The trip went fine for about five days; then, one of the horses took sick. On the eighth day, the horse doctor told us we could start for the railroad if we let the horse walk all the way. "But he must have grain three times a day."

There were very few roads in Texas in those days. You wound in and out of people's farms. Sometimes you would open three or four barbwire gates, going one mile. Then again, you would go a mile or two before coming to a gate. Our only way to get grain for the sick horse was to buy it from farmers who lived along our return route.

At one point, the road ran within thirty feet of a Negro's shack which sat on the other side of the fence in a cotton field. Butler said to me, "Here is a good place for you to get some corn for the horse." The man was standing by the house, so when we stopped he walked over to the fence and spoke to us.

I said, "Mister, we have a very sick horse and the doctor said he must have grain three times a day, and only then can he walk. Would you sell us grain, anything you have?"

He answered, "I sure would love to, but our crops were very poorly last year. We just can't spare it." I argued with him for several minutes that the horse was sick and we would pay him more than the feed was worth, that we just had to have feed. However, he just kept saying no. Then he turned around and started back to the house.

Butler had sat there the whole time

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22	4.03	32	5.29	42	7.83	52	14.09	62	21.87
23	4.13	33	5.46	43	8.37	53	14.87	63	22.95
24	4.23	34	5.63	44	8.94	54	15.65	64	24.25
25	4.34	35	5.82	45	9.52	55	16.40	65	25.90
26	4.46	36	6.00	46	10.09	56	17.10	66	27.97
27	4.58	37	6.17	47	10.69	57	17.75	67	30.38
28	4.71	38	6.36	48	11.30	58	18.41	68	33.03
29	4.84	39	6.61	49	11.94	59	19.14	69	35.79
30	4.98	40	6.93	50	12.61	60	20.00	70	38.55

NOT ISSUED OVER AGE 70

$2,000 $1 first month introductory premium

Age	Rate	Age	Rate	Age	Rate	Age	Rate	Age	Rate	Age	Rate
21	1.61	31	2.09	41	2.97	51	5.35	61	8.40	71	16.53
22	1.64	32	2.15	42	3.17	52	5.64	62	8.78	72	17.61
23	1.68	33	2.22	43	3.38	53	5.94	63	9.21	73	18.74
24	1.72	34	2.29	44	3.61	54	6.26	64	9.74	74	19.96
25	1.77	35	2.36	45	3.84	55	6.59	65	10.39	75	21.31
26	1.82	36	2.43	46	4.07	56	6.87	66	11.22	76	22.81
27	1.86	37	2.50	47	4.31	57	7.13	67	12.19	77	24.40
28	1.92	38	2.58	48	4.55	58	7.40	68	13.24	78	26.11
29	1.97	39	2.67	49	4.81	59	7.69	69	14.35	79	27.95
30	2.03	40	2.80	50	5.08	60	8.03	70	15.45	80	29.83

NOT ISSUED OVER AGE 80

$1,000 $1 first month introductory premium

Age	Rate	Age	Rate	Age	Rate	Age	Rate	Age	Rate
29	1.01	40	1.43	51	2.70	62	4.42	73	9.40
30	1.04	41	1.51	52	2.85	63	4.63	74	10.01
31	1.07	42	1.61	53	3.00	64	4.90	75	10.68
32	1.10	43	1.72	54	3.16	65	5.22	76	11.43
33	1.14	44	1.83	55	3.32	66	5.64	77	12.23
34	1.17	45	1.95	56	3.46	67	6.12	78	13.08
35	1.21	46	2.06	57	3.59	68	6.65	79	14.00
36	1.24	47	2.18	58	3.73	69	7.20	80	14.94
37	1.28	48	2.30	59	3.87	70	7.75	81	15.98
38	1.32	49	2.43	60	4.04	71	8.29	82	17.10
39	1.37	50	2.57	61	4.23	72	8.83	83	18.31
								84	19.63
								85	21.08

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CITY ____ STATE ____ ZIP CODE ____

If You haven't lived at your present address at least TWO YEARS—Give us your former address here

DATE OF BIRTH ____ Month Day Year Age ____ Sex ____ Race ____ Height ____ Weight ____
Are you now in good health to the best of your knowledge? ____ (Yes or No) Occupation? ____
Have you ever had any of the following: Cancer, hypertension, disease of the lungs, kidney, heart, nervous system, or any other disease or ailment? ____ (Yes or No) Give details ____
Beneficiary ____ Relationship ____

"I hereby agree that the statements herein contained are the inducement for the issuance of the insurance herein applied for, and that the insurance will not take effect until the policy is issued and delivered to me during my continuance in sound health, physically and mentally."

Date ____ Write Name Here ____ (Applicant)
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never saying a word. However, when he saw this man turn and start walking away, he said, "Hey, you, take a good look at me! I said a *good* look! Did you ever see my picture in the paper?"

The colored man took off his hat, kind of nodded yes, and said, "Yes sir, I sure have."

Butler replied, "Then go get these horses some feed."

Honestly, before those horses finished eating, the fellow was sorry the corn wasn't better. He had his wife fix us our lunch. Believe me, that woman sure gave us a swell meal. When I offered her two dollars for one of the finest lunches I have ever eaten, and two dollars for the corn, her husband said, "No sir, we wouldn't think of charging you gentlemen." I forced the money into the woman's hands, with him saying "No."

After we started driving, I asked Butler why he'd had his picture in the paper. He said his picture was never in the paper. I said, "Well, something scared the devil out of that man. What was it?"

He replied, "I have two uncles who operated in this country as outlaws. I look exactly like one of them."

Here is my question: When were the Butler brothers outlaws and how long did they last? Also, did they rob banks or other people?—Ray A. Yeoman, 12937 So. Catalina Street, Gardena, California 90247

A Rusty Can's Message

(Continued from page 35)

EARLY in the winter of 1889, returning from my second trip up the trail to Montana, I stopped by my grandfather's ranch on Talala Creek twenty miles from Claremore, Oklahoma (then Indian Territory), to spend Christmas with the family, and it was there that I met Jason Flippin, a man I judged at that time to be in his late sixties. He was as straight as an Indian, more than six feet in height, and wore a long sandy beard. I had lost my father two years before, and my mother and sisters were there at Grandfather's ranch.

One evening, around the spacious fireplace, the subject of lost treasure was brought up, and Grandfather said: "Jase, show Jackie that can." Whereupon Flippin arose, dragged an old rawhide trunk from beneath the front room bed, and took out a rust-eaten can which he opened and extracted some scraps of paper, faded and stained with mold. I give here, to the best of my memory the greater part of the message I was able to decipher:

"Old Chinati and his red skins attackted our party, wiped us all out. Sculped me—pulled my clothes off and left me fer dead. I come to—don't know if it were next day or later—found everything burned that they couldn't carry off. Found a dead redskin, took off his britches and put them on. Found another one and he was alayin on top of a good skinnin knife—it was all the weepun I could find. Kindled a fire with the back of the knife agin a flint rock in some dry grass and some wrappin paper and sticks. Cut off a piece of meat from a dead pack mule—couldnt eet much for it were a spilin already, and made me powerful sick. Red skins had took all the grub cept a can of bakin powder. I poured out the powder and took the can along fer a water cup. Am tryin to back trail and find the spring in the rocks—deep spring. no bottom seems like when we drapped the gold in it to hide it. Caint seem to git my bearings—powerful quare feelin in my head. No water yet. Et one snake and half of its mate. Made a cover for my head frum their skins, pieced it together with fring frum my britches legs. Caint find the spring. To them that finds this here can the gold is in the bottom of it—had one of that there devils deep hole and I would give all the gold in it fer this one can full of water frum that there hole.

Gideon Gaines."

Early in the spring of 1890, Tom Hunt of Williamson County, Texas, who had married my mother's sister, built a ranch house about five miles southeast of my grandfather's ranch, and I located a mile north, building a dugout for temporary quarters. Grandfather, my uncles, and Jason Flippin helped build the dugout while Mother and the little ones remained with Grandfather. Jason Flippin batched with me in the dugout. During his sojourn with me he told of the many days and weeks of fruitless search that he and Jefferson Breede put in looking for that deep spring high in the Chisos where, according to that "voice from beyond the grave," the gold had been hidden. I, myself, also spent many fruitless days looking for that same hidden treasure, and I am told that expeditions of all sizes came each year or so, looking for the lost spring where the gold was hidden.

According to Jason Flippin, Jefferson Breede was a "strappling big Mormon, six feet four, wearing a heavy black mustache," and he stated further that Breede, after giving up hope of finding the gold, returned to Utah, where he died in 1873.

LONE STAR
GEORGE WHITE

"It hurts like hell around Dallas!"

Later in 1890, Jason Flippin left for the Chickasaw Nation to visit his son, Giles Flippin, whom he said was last heard from at Marlow Grove. He said he would let me hear from him later, and I could send him the trunk by a freighter. Going on circle with the Mashed O outfit that fall, I had taken the trunk over to Uncle Tom Hunt's new house to keep it safe because the rats were bad in the dugout while vacant.

Two years slipped by without the promised letter from Jason Flippin, and in the fall of 1892 I went into the canebrakes south of Grand River to winter some stuff. In order to receive some of the livestock, I had to ride to the J. C. Loving ranch on Cow Creek in the Chickasaw Nation. While down that way I rode over to the little town now called Marlow and made inquiry about my friend, Jason Flippin, and was told that he had died shortly after reaching the Giles Flippin home. He had first taken down with an attack of pneumonia, I was told, and might have recovered, but possibly died from the shock of the loss of his son, Giles Flippin, who was killed that same week by a sixteen-year-old boy named Jimmy Harbold.

After the coming of grass in the spring of 1893 I returned from Grand River bottoms with a herd, moving into the Cooweescoowee District near Claremore, and began working for the McClellan outfit under Ed Bomar, the youngest range boss in the Indian Territory.

The first thing I learned upon my return to Claremore was that Uncle Tom Hunt's ranch house had burned down with a total loss of most everything inside. My young cousin, Dorman Hunt, had managed to run in and get out with an ivory-handled Colt's .45 pistol that had belonged to our Uncle John Barber who had been murdered in 1889, and the gun was my baby cousin's dearest treasure. Had I been present I am sure I would have made an effort to retrieve that old rawhide trunk of Jason Flippin's which contained "The Rusty Can's Message."

Many Trails Led to Gordon

(Continued from page 29)

the drifters. However, when spring came and the cowpokes pushed deep into the hills they found the cattle not only safe but fat as butter. Today this huge area of Nebraska is rated as one of the top ranges in the world. The hills offer plenty of winter protection and the grass excells that of most hard land ranges.

In 1881 surveyors staked out the big county in advance of the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley railroad. Settlers were then encouraged to come out and locate. In addition to the Scamahorn colony, Jules Sandoz arrived in 1884 from Verdigre, Nebraska, where he had settled after leaving Switzerland in 1881. Although Jules did not settle very close to Gordon, his tireless efforts in bringing out settlers and locating them on homesteads was a great asset to Sheridan County.

The Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley railroad was bought out in 1884 by the Chicago and Northwestern system, which is still in operation today. The following year the line was extended from Valentine westward to Gordon. With the advent of the railroad several other towns sprang up in Sheridan County—Clinton, Rushville and Hay Springs, all farther west.

With more and more settlers pouring in, it soon became necessary to organize a county government. A hotly contested election was held to see which one of these towns would become the county seat. When the election was over there was so much evidence of fraud and corruption on all sides that the courts had to decide the matter. Rushville, the town nearest to the east-west center of the county, was eventually selected.

DOWN THROUGH its pioneer history several names became linked inseparably with the new wilderness county in the Nebraska panhandle. This list included John Gordon, after whom Gordon was named; John Scamahorn, founder of Gordon; Jules A. Sandoz, who settled along the Niobrara River and played such an important role in bringing in settlers; David C. "Doc" Middleton, an outlaw and killer who ran a saloon in Gordon for some years; and "Rattlesnake Jack" McIntyre, who was a familiar sight to Gordon's earlier inhabitants.

These men fit no single pattern. Some were good, some were bad, some indifferent. Some built, some tore down, some didn't care. But together they produced the region we know today.

We have chronicled "Doc" Middleton's colorful past in two books, *Rim of the Sandhills* and *Yesterday's Trails*, so we will only mention him here. Suffice it to say that, although he was an outlaw and killer, he was gracious and refined. He was also fast with a six-gun. He drifted into Gordon in 1885 after being released from the pen at Lincoln for stealing horses in Holt, Keyapaha and other counties in north-central Nebraska. Not long after his arrival he set up a pole shanty saloon in Gordon, which he operated for some years. Death finally claimed Doc at Douglas, Wyoming, when he was an old man.

Jack McIntyre, "Rattlesnake Jack," at times ran a sort of home-made sideshow on Gordon's streets to earn money. He was bitten repeatedly but seemed immune to the poison and always kept several snakes around his dugout home on the Spade ranch south of town. His children were allowed to play only with the tame ones. One that wasn't so tame finally bit Jack on the tongue and that was the end of Jack.

With its elevation of 3500 feet and population of 2600 (counting a few hundred not yet incorporated in it) Gordon is one of the most popular and progressive little cities of Nebraska's panhandle. Its trade territory is vast, taking in the huge cattle empire to the south and a big area of southwestern South Dakota to the north, as well as farm and ranch country to the east and west.

Gordon has also become widely known for its annual Sheridan County Fair and Rodeo. This event was first held in 1885 as a fair only, the rodeo part being added somewhat later. Today this big event draws thousands of fans from all over the country.

"Riding to the Hounds"

(Continued from page 19)

course, while Snowflake was dodging the brush like the cutting horse he was, and it was all I could do to sit tight in the saddle without losing a stirrup until we caught up with Wallace who had reined up a short distance from where the hounds had overtaken the wolf.

Fly, Queenie and Bridget had passed the pack leader Don and swiftly closed the 300-yard head start of the biggest wolf I'd ever laid eyes on. No sound of baying or barking came from the hounds, no futile waste of wind. This hound pack ran by sight and instinct, not with lowered heads sniffing the scent of tracks. These hounds were all killers by breeding and were now in pursuit of the deadliest killer of the cow country.

The swift greyhound Fly soon overtook the wolf, snapping at its tail, turning the wolf time after time in the space of a few seconds. Then Queenie was there, snapping at the wolf's rear, then Bridget. And the wolf was stopped, whirling and snapping at the hounds who kept out of reach of the snapping jaws. Don and Spartacus, the shaggy stag-hound, worked as a team. They moved in and got the wolf down, Don holding a death grip on the throat, while Sparticus ripped and tore the wolf's entrails, with the rest of the hounds piling on top. The wolf, fangs bared, ripping chunks of hairy dog flesh, was dying fast, and it was all over but the shouting when me'n Snowflake got there.

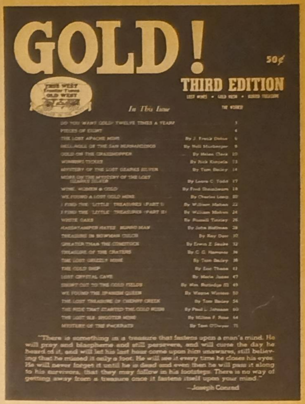
WALLACE was on foot now, busy getting the hound pack away from the dead wolf before they tore the pelt to pieces. He had to take the pelt, the whole head and the wide strip along the back, and the bushy tail, to claim the twenty-five dollar bounty.

"No doubt about it," Wallace said. "This varmint's a timber wolf. Its head is much larger than the head of a Montana prairie wolf."

While Wallace was skinning, I took a look at the hounds to see if they were badly cut up, but save for a few minor cuts they had come out of the fight uninjured. The hounds were lying down, panting and licking wolf blood from their jaws and getting cactus spines from their paws. Once the excitement of the chase was over and the wolf killed, the hounds were relaxed and resting.

By the time Wallace got the wolf skinned, the head and tail cut off and rolled up in the pelt and tied behind his saddle cantle, the hounds had gotten their wind, the sweat drying in the breeze, and we were all ready and set to get going.

We headed back for Big Warm Creek to let our horses water and the hounds



"There is something in a treasure that fastens upon a man's mind. He will pray and blaspheme and still persevere, and will curse the day he heard of it, and will let his last hour come upon him unawares, still believing that he missed it only a foot. He will see it every time he closes his eyes. He will never forget it until he is dead and even then he will pass it along to his survivors, that they may follow in his footsteps. There is no way of getting away from a treasure once it fastens itself upon your mind."

—Joseph Conrad

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drink and lie down in the shallow water to cool off. Wallace located two partly eaten sheep carcasses and picked up the tracks along the creek banks of at least two wolves headed in the direction of the Larb Hills badlands. We followed the creek about half a mile hunting for sign, but found no more tracks, so we angled off a little from where Big Warm Creek met Beaver Creek. Below where we now traveled along a high benchland there was a stretch of level ground. The level stretch was the north end of Sun Prairie and beyond were the badlands where scattered herds of cattle were grazing.

This was once the disputed hunting grounds of the Sioux and Blackfoot Indians, where once the great herds of buffalo ranged. The recent rains had filled the old buffalo wallows with water, and the buffalo grass and bunch grass were stirrup high in the coulees. Teepee rocks, used to weight down the ends of buffalo hide lodges, were still visible in the tall grass where the Indians had camped before the coming of the white man. Bleached buffalo bones and skulls left by the white hunters' wanton slaughter remained as a mute reminder of the disgraceful extermination of the buffalo herds.

As we rode along with the hounds following, Wallace scanned the country ahead with the binoculars. For perhaps a minute or more he kept the field glasses focused on a bunch of milling Circle C cattle, then his lips flattened in a mirthless grin that matched the glint in his puckered blue-eyes.

"Those timber wolves from the Cypress Hills in Canada don't like the taste of sheep meat, Pard," Wallace said. "They have a hankerin' for beef. There's three of them raisin' hell amongst the yearlings. Yank down your hat. We're going in for the big kill."

Wallace put the binoculars back in their case and we gigged our horses to a lope. The hounds, seeming to sense there was another wolf chase, started to range ahead of the horses, but Wallace called them back.

"I don't want the wolves to sight the hounds," he explained. "They're still too busy with this calf slaughter."

As we shortened the quarter-mile distance we could hear the angry bellow of cows and big four-year-old steers, and it was only when we got within 200 yards of the milling cattle that the three wolves became aware of us and the hound pack.

THE WOLVES left the bunch of cattle and stayed close together for a short distance, then they split up. Suddenly Wallace reined up and yanked his Winchester carbine from its saddle scabbard. Without bothering to raise the near sights to get the proper range, he commenced shooting. It was a good 300 yards and the running wolves made a fast moving target. It took two shots to down the first one. Another shot turned the nearest wolf over in a running somersault. Then he left the other wolf for the hounds that were now off and running hell bent, with Wallace right behind them yelling encouragement, his big gelding flying like a race horse.

And for once my fat and lazy Snowflake cowpony, short ears flattened back, was matching Prince's long-legged stride, now only a few lengths ahead. Snowflake was no longer dodging the high sagebrush clumps, but jumping high over all obstacles. On the second unexpected jump, my old beat-up Stetson hat flew off. I was now standing high in my short stirrups, hollering like a drunk Injun. We were crossing a large prairie dog town but I was only dimly aware of the dangerous mounds and occasional badger holes.

It was just beyond the prairie dog town that I saw Fly, Queenie and Bridget head off the timber wolf, and then in the next few seconds Don and Spartacus, and the brindle Pedro, went in for the kill. Don got his throat hold, and hung on like a bull terrier, Sparticus and Pedro going for the underside to rip belly guts. The wolf went down fighting.

It was over and done with in seconds, and Wallace was on the ground wading into the pile up of snarling hounds, calling them off the dead and bloody wolf, to save enough of the carcass to collect the bounty. The tuckered out, thirsty hounds headed for the nearby buffalo wallow that was half filled with water.

After Wallace had skinned the wolf carcass we rode back to where the two wolves he'd shot lay. One was a dingy white in color, the other a dark iron-gray. No hound dog rips had marked them.

With four wolf pelts rolled up and tied to our saddle strings we headed for the Circle C ranch with the tired and footsore hounds following. Four big Canadian timber wolves killed in one day set a record of some kind, with that rare albino wolf to top it off.

We had not eaten since early morning breakfast, and after feeding the hounds double rations, we ate a hearty supper at the mess table. It so happened that George Hall, inspector for the Montana Livestock Association, was staying overnight at the ranch. He was duly qualified to inspect the wolf pelts for the twenty-five dollar bounty, and the total of one hundred dollars was split fifty-fifty between Wallace and me.

At the barn by lantern light I helped Wallace doctor Don, Spartacus, Pedro and a couple-three more hounds that the last wolf had cut up a little before he was killed. The wounds were mostly torn ears, head and neck rips that the hounds couldn't lick clean with long healing tongues; small fang cuts which required hemstitching with a curved surgeon's needle and catgut, and iodine swabs and carbolic salve.

Wallace and me spent the following day visiting the lodges of the tribal chiefs and medicine men on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, taking the wolf pelts along for Black Dog's squaw to tan. The pelt of the white wolf caused a lot of discussion among the Old Men. The pure white timber wolf came from the far north Slave Lake country—a distinct and separate breed that kept to itself. The great white wolf was honored as a Medicine Wolf named "Shongapasha," meaning White Dog, and was used for travois and sled dogs a long time ago.

WHEN George Baker, the Circle C wolfer, showed up one day at the ranch to get a fresh grub supply, he was bellyaching about his traplines being slim pickings. The wolves were getting wise to the strychnine-baited traps, no matter how expertly the wolfer covered them with loose dirt and leaves. Baker would move his pack outfit from one winter line camp belonging to the Circle C to another, stay a week or two at each camp until he had trapped it out, then move on.

"The varmints smell the baited traps and pass them by," Baker told Wallace, "and go on killing plenty calves. I'm plumb fed up with trappin'."

So Wallace made a deal with the wolfer to hang up his steel traps and take the hounds. The older dogs, no growing pups. He instructed Baker how to feed the hounds, baked cornbread with chunks of meat, a big feed once a day at evening, so the dogs would be running empty-bellied. Baker liked dogs and they liked him, and he could be trusted not to abuse them in any way—no blacksnake bull whip or double ketch rope or quirt. The hounds were already trained and knew their job.

When George Baker took the pack to his camp in the badlands I had a lonesome feeling for awhile. Then one day early in July my older half-brother Bob drove in to the ranch from Malta with a slate-blue hound that looked like a Great Dane. Bob told me it was a Siberian boarhound bitch named Bonnie. She was heavy with pups and due to whelp her litter. Bob said she was a valuable dog for breeding purposes and that he'd paid a hundred dollars for her at Helena. He warned me she was savage and bad-tempered—that she didn't like kids and to stay away from her. Bob put her in the empty buggy shed that had a ten-foot-high pole gate, fastened with a long wooden stob. The shed was across from the mess cabin.

A few days later, Bonnie whelped a litter of three pups. Al Taylor, the cook, had to shove her tin plate of grub and water pan in under the lower pole of the high gate, while Bonnie snarled a white-fanged warning to keep out. The dirt floor was covered with a foot of sawdust and Bonnie did her jobs in one corner and permitted Al to shovel them out and sprinkle down fresh sawdust. Let a man on foot, or a horsebacker, pass too close to the buggy shed and Bonnie would charge the gate with a deep menacing snarl, spooking the unwary saddle horse, scaring the daylights out of the horsebacker or man on foot.

One afternoon when I'd got back from riding the pasture fence and was headed for the kitchen door of the mess cabin by way of the dugout dog house, there was Bonnie's three-weeks-old pups waddling towards me, wagging their tails, eager to play. I'd always had a strong hankering to play with these rollicky

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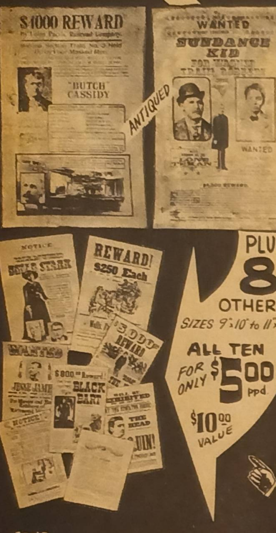

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pups and here was my chance. And I took it. They were all slate-blue and slick-haired like their mammy and fat as butter balls. I picked up the nearest one and was fondling it in my arms when I heard Bonnie's deep-throated snarl. When she came out of the dugout I dropped the pup right now. There was plenty of time for me to get inside the mess cabin but I stood my ground, perhaps to show my kid guts. Bonnie was stalking towards me, sort of crouched, when I yelled, "Bonnie, get back! Get back, Bonnie!"

I put both arms up to protect my face as the bitch sprang with a force that knocked me over backwards. I must have hollered and screamed for help as Bonnie sank her teeth deep into my right shoulder, tearing the flesh apart, because the cowhands came to my rescue and had to rope Bonnie to pull her off, but not before she had chewed me up.

I was carried inside the mess cabin and laid on Al Taylor's bed. The only thing the cowhands could think of to stop the bleeding was a fresh cow-flap they brought in a bucket from the cow barn and applied as a poultice to my badly torn shoulder.

Horace Brewster had my father's matched team of trotting horses hooked to the spring wagon and the back seat removed. They carried Al Taylor's bed, with me on it, and laid it on the bed of the wagon, and Horace drove the forty miles to Malta in record time.

THERE WAS NO local doctor at Malta, but by some lucky chance a young man recently graduated from medical school at Western University in London, Ontario, Canada, happened to be in Malta seeking a likely place to hang up his shingle. The doctor's name was George W. Clay and he was summoned to the Anex Saloon where I was unloaded in Al Taylor's bed onto a poker table. I was a sorry sight to behold, naked to the waist, my whole shoulder encased in fresh cow manure, and still wearing my blood-spattered Levi's.

In reply to Brewster's anxious query, Doc Clay pronounced his approval of such a poultice when nothing else was available—he said it wasn't the first time it had been used without harm. Brewster and the bartender held me down while Doc Clay sponged off the blood and manure, cut away the ragged ends of raw flesh and cauterized the wounds with bluestone. He also treated and bandaged my left thumb Bonnie had bitten when I'd shoved my hand into her jaws, trying to break her hold on my shoulder. It was all a painful ordeal for me but I managed not to complain. Afterwards they gave me a warm sponge bath and helped me get into my clean underwear and town clothes that Brewster had been thoughtful enough to bring along.

I had to leave on the evening train for Great Falls, my winter home, and Doc Clay told me to be sure and check in with our family doctor right away so he could look me over and change the bandages. And I did. Doc Longeway complimented Doc Clay on the excellent job he had done and agreed that the poultice probably saved my life. Those were the days before the painful ordeal of rabies shots, but Dr. Longeway questioned me about Bonnie showing any symptoms of being rabid. I took pains to explain that the boarhound was healthy and sound, that she was savage and bad-tempered by nature and was simply defending her pups. That I had told Brewster I didn't want Bonnie shot and to tell my brother Bob that it was all my fault.

I learned months later that despite every effort they made at the ranch to gentle the Siberian boarhound, she remained hostile and vicious, so had to be put away. Her three weaned pups, however, were gentle and friendly and proved their virtues as good fighting hounds when they joined the pack.

I also learned that Dr. George W. Clay had decided that the town of Malta was as good a place as any to hang up his shingle. Doc Clay was destined to become Malta's best loved citizen as both a cow country doctor and a man in every meaning of the word. In later years "Little Doc," as he was affectionately known, was elected to the Senate, and I was indeed proud to have had the honor of being his first patient in Malta.

DURING THE course of about twenty-six years the hound pack at the Circle C ranch changed. The older dogs of the original pack had long since gone to their rewards in Dog Heaven, although certain traces of their get-of-sire remained.

Big Brin, the new pack leader, closely resembled the original Don. Colonel Teddy Roosevelt had given Wallace a large-boned half-grown Airedale pup. Wallace named him Colonel in honor of his friend of Rough Rider fame. And there was the fleet greyhound Spinner, a descendant of the original Bridget. When the Circle C purchased the Prouty ranch along the Missouri, Jed Prouty gave his pack of shaggy staghounds to Wallace. And a pair of Russian wolfhounds, male and female, donated by Uncle Sam towards the extermination of wolves and coyotes, arrived at the ranch in separate crates. Their long white silky coats were well groomed, brushed and combed, but in a week's time they were a sorry mess of cockleburrs.

As for joining the Circle C hound pack, Uncle Sam's generous gift was a rank failure, especially after Brin challenged the male Russian wolfhound, Boris, in a one-sided, short-lived battle for supremacy. Boris tucked his tail between his hind legs and sought shelter in the log cabin office underneath the rolltop desk. After that Brin simply ignored Boris and when the two Russian wolfhounds flatly refused to join the hound pack, Bob's wife Daisy took Boris for a house pet, and the female Duchess was used for breeding purposes.

Colonel, the big Airedale, proved to be another Spartacus. Brin and Colonel worked as a pair. Brin tackled the wolf's throat while Colonel went for the entrails, with the rest of the hounds closing in for the kill. Over the years the Circle C hounds made a sort of record in clearing the Montana cow country in the badlands along the Missouri River of wolves and coyotes that preyed on the cattlemen's livestock.

Sportsmen and horse lovers competing in the modern-day horse shows for ribbons and cup trophies, who have never ridden with a hound pack in a wild, hell-bent-for-leather race across the Montana rolling prairies, have indeed missed the thrill of that rare and excitingly dangerous sport. Always present was the danger of your horse, traveling at breakneck speed, coming a cropper, by stepping into a badger or prairie dog hole that could cripple the horse and rider.

That type of cowboy sport, following a pack of hounds in pursuit of a prairie wolf or coyote, has long since passed. It belonged to the old frontier West before the coming of the homesteader invasion that fenced off the free range, plowed under the old roundup trails, and fenced in creeks and waterholes. Free range was vital for the survival of the pioneer cattlemen of Montana, and fencing put an end to the big cow outfits and the days of cowpunchers riding to the hounds, prairie style.

Mysterious Ramming of the *Pacific*

(Continued from page 31)

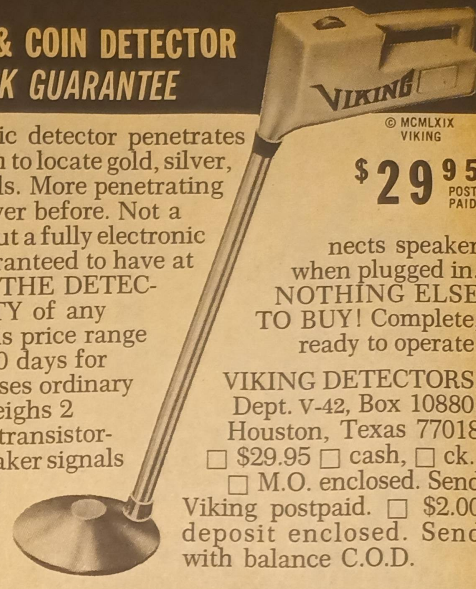
and rushed back to the spot where three narrow, mound-like something [*sic*] covered with tarps showed that there lay the remains of three human beings who, with 300 others, full of life and energy, sailed away from this port a few days before. . . ."

The last body, that of a twenty-five-year-old woman, was "scanned . . . for a trace of resemblance to some loved one known to have been on board the ill-fated ship." Silently, hundreds passed the still form, none able to say, " 'That was my daughter' 'or my wife,' or 'my sister, who was lost on the *Pacific*.' " All shook their heads and turned away. Suddenly a prominent citizen rushed forward and identified her. The crowd rejoiced, finding some satisfaction in the fact she had been claimed.

In the following days, more bodies and wreckage were found. A shattered rowboat drifted ashore near Clover Point, Victoria. A grimmer discovery was the body of attractive Fanny Palmer, nineteen, who had sailed aboard the *Pacific* to join her sisters in San Francisco; her remains floated ashore almost at the very doorstep of her home. The body of gold commissioner John Howe Sullivan was found at Becher Bay by Indians. He was interred at Ross Bay Cemetery.

To date, nothing had been heard of the phantom sailing ship which had nudged *Pacific* that fateful night. No one knew her identity or whereabouts; all prayed she would soon dock with survivors.

ON NOVEMBER 16, the ghastly facts swept the Northwest. Shocked and enraged, the entire coast was in an uproar. It had been learned that the mysterious culprit was the American ship *Orpheus*, captained by Charles A. Sawyer. Ironically, *Orpheus* herself had become a total loss off Cape Beale the morning after colliding with *Pacific*. No *Pacific* sur-



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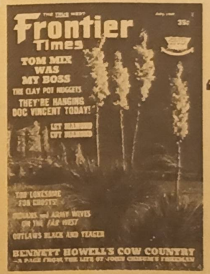
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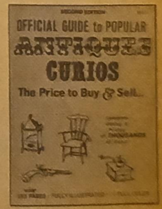

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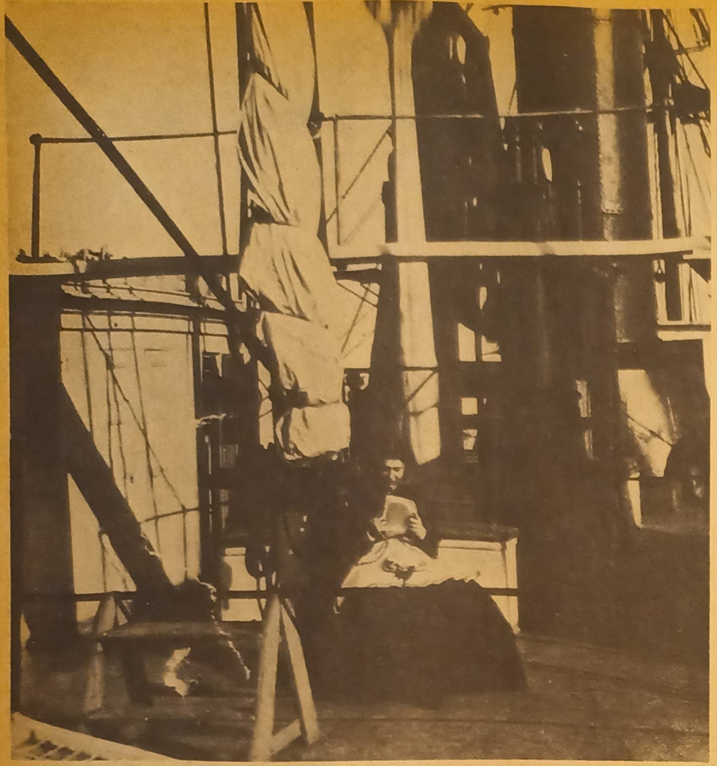

Courtesy San Francisco Maritime Museum

A happier moment aboard the ill-fated paddle steamer *Pacific*.

vivors were aboard her.

The common belief that Capt. Sawyer had callously sailed away, leaving hundreds struggling in the sea, fanned the Northwest into "lynch fever."

"So strong was this sentiment," said one report, "that he would have undoubtedly met with severe treatment had he been in the city [Victoria] at that time."

The subsequent coroner's inquest at Victoria sternly condemned the officers of both ships, charging that *Pacific's* lifeboats could handle but half her human cargo, that she was in deplorable condition and her lookout had been insufficient. *Orpheus*, it was said, had "unjustifiably" crossed *Pacific's* bow, and Capt. Sawyer had not remained by the sinking ship "to ascertain the damage she had sustained."

Sawyer then was arrested in San Francisco on the charge of deliberately casting *Orpheus* away. Acquitted of that absurdity, he found himself bitterly denounced and hated the length of the West Coast. Then his crew formally accused him of having ruthlessly deserted the *Pacific*—despite having heard the screams of the dying!

At the official inquiry in the Bay City, Sawyer testified his second mate had mistaken *Pacific's* riding lights for the Cape Flattery lighthouse. Due to the heavy seas, his deck watch had not spotted the lights until they were almost onto *Pacific*, and it was too late.

With whistle screaming, *Pacific* grazed *Orpheus* amidships. Sawyer thought the steamer to be backing off, but she bounced free, then struck him again, snapping and fouling his rigging. *Pacific* hit him yet a third time, he said, leaving his ship "comparatively a wreck on the starboard side." When his crew had rushed to their emergency stations, they found *Orpheus* half-full of water, and Sawyer had set about repairing his ship, which engaged his full attention for "10 to 15 minutes." He had been too busy to look after the steamer, he said.

Safely underway once more, Capt. Sawyer glanced back. But nothing was to be seen or heard. His men then berated the other vessel, he recalled, for not having seen to *their* injuries!

The court finally granted Sawyer benefit of the doubt. He had been widely respected until this time, although a hard master, which was thought to be the motive of his crewmen trying to destroy him. But the world was not as forgiving. Until his death in 1894, Capt. Sawyer was cursed for having abandoned *Pacific's* hundreds to their deaths.

Several attempts have been made in recent years to salvage *Pacific's* safe, containing a Wells Fargo shipment of $79,220 in currency and gold. Many of her passengers had been miners returning from the Cassair, and it is thought their wealth makes *Pacific* worth $200,000 to the lucky finder. The sketchy details known of her tragic end have made pinpointing her location extremely difficult, although in 1961 American skindivers claimed to have recovered several relics from her rotting hulk.

Capt. Charles A. Sawyer died twenty years after the notorious shipwreck, a very lonely man. Whether he earned this searing indictment remains another tragic mystery of the West.

A Tip of the Hat to Sam Davis

(Continued from page 23)

to practice a style of intense personal journalism. This meant putting all of their hearts and some of their souls into the newspaper. Many of them did not use their own names on the by-lines; Samuel Clemens was "Josh" before he became "Mark Twain." William Wright was "Dan deQuille," and it was suspected that columns signed "Brax" were written by Rollin Daggett.

Sam Davis created not only a fictitious character for himself, but a newspaper as well. For more than twenty years news articles appeared in the Carson *Daily Appeal*, edited by Davis, in which were reprinted savage editorials credited to the Wabuska *Mangler*. Wabuska was a tiny mining camp near Carson and there never was any newspaper published there, but the *Appeal* manufactured one and located it in Wabuska, calling it "a spectral newspaper." Davis frequently took the Wabuska *Mangler* to task, saying the editor was a disgrace to journalism.

The controversy between the *Mangler* and other newspaper editors continued with such a show of plausibility that many people still regard the Wabuska *Mangler* as one of the most aggressive newspapers published in Nevada. When the Carson *Appeal* got tired of keeping the fictitious newspaper alive, it announced that the editor, on account of ill health, had closed up his office. Later Davis wrote an editorial hinting that the real reason for the *Mangler's* demise was that the editor had fled to avoid a grand jury indictment. There was never another mention of the Wabuska *Mangler* in the Carson *Appeal*.

SAM DAVIS did not always hide behind a pseudonym, however. When Nevada first established her liberal divorce laws, there was violent criticism from other states. In defense of Nevada's position, he wrote such editorials as this: "If some sister states are stricken with remorse or find themselves in sudden paroxysms of virtuous indignation, let them pass a law and enforce it, correcting the evils complained of at home, which will keep their divorcees from coming to Reno. Nevada does not want them. When other states enact and enforce some such drastic measure, the West will begin to have some regard for their particular brand of virtue. Until then, the West may be pardoned for believing that cant and hypocrisy often join hands with the lawless element and make a grandstand play for public effect."

Samuel Post Davis was born in Bran-

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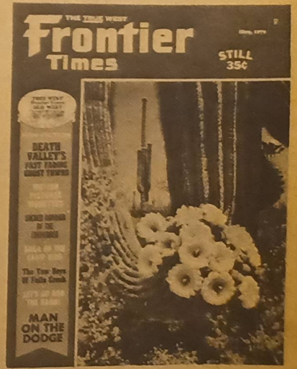

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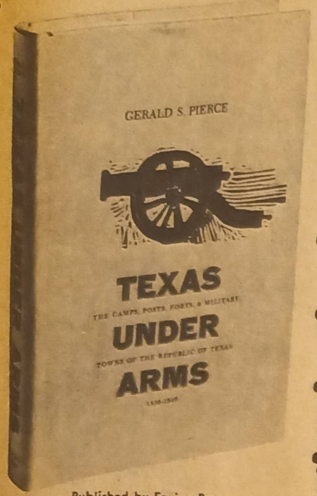

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ford, Connecticut on April 4, 1850. In his early teens his father, an Episcopalian minister, sent him to Racine College in Wisconsin, where he spent three years preparing for the ministry. His mother also was deeply religious, and it was she who decided that her first-born son should follow in his father's footsteps. Sam had his first taste of literary success while at Racine, his work consisting of humorous quips published in the local papers. He knew even then that journalism, rather than the ministry, was his calling.

When his family moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, he joined them there, taking a course of study at the local university. Later he worked intermittently as a reporter for the Nebraska City *News*, the Omaha *Herald*, the St. Louis *Republican* and the Chicago *Times*. Finally he joined his brother in Sacramento, California, where his brother was editing the Sacracento *Bee*.

Davis' journalistic career began in earnest in 1872 when he became the editor of the Vallejo *Independent* during the political campaign of that year. During the next decade he worked on many California papers, and it was during this time that his reputation for sympathy and humor was established.

He was reporting for the San Fransico *Chronicle* when the famous Hill *versus* Sharon trial occurred. Sara Althea Hill, a protégé of the wealthy San Francisco madam, Mammy Pleasant, was suing Senator William Sharon for breach of promise. Sara was a very beautiful woman of questionable sanity and was indeed later committed to an institution where she remained for the rest of her life.

Sam's sympathy for Sara was so great that he was empowered by her legal guardian to take care of her, and it was he who accompanied her on her last journey to the sanitarium. She outlived him by many years, but he looked after her affairs until his own death.

Sam Davis occasionally took verbal pokes at Senator Sharon in later years, as is shown by this editorial appearing in the Carson *Appeal* during the political campaign of 1884. Sam wrote: "It is thought nothing amiss to resurrect the dead and vote them by wholesale. So long as the memory of the departed is respected by voting him in proper alignment with the party with which he affiliated in his lifetime, the ethics are not considered as having been violated. Hon. William Sharon was accorded the credit of having invaded the cemetery for primary votes, but he has no patent on the method."

Sam's kindness paid off unexpectedly sometimes, too. At one time, Mammy Pleasant had decided she wanted to write her autobiography and asked Sam to help her with it. She began dictating to him, but when he found that she intended to to make people buy her off to keep her from writing about them, he gave it up. Other reporters heard of her plan and tried every possible method of obtaining the secrets she guarded. Mammy was growing old by then, living in the delapidated, spooky mansion she had built in San Francisco during her more affluent days. Finally Sam published a few innocuous and entirely decorous reminiscences, saying that this was all Mammy Pleasant had to say of her famous friends.

When Mammy Pleasant died, Sam Davis was much surprised to learn that he had inherited the mansion as well as a goodly slice of the lady's wealth.

DAVIS was a newspaperman by profession, but he was an author and poet at heart. In the 1870s he was lured to Nevada by that articulate fraternity of men in Virginia City who were infusing the literature of the West with the excitement and adventure of a Nevada mining camp. As a reporter on Joe Goodman's *Territorial Enterprise*, his closest companions were Dan deQuille and Rollin Daggett. Mark Twain had left Nevada a few years earlier and was achieving world-wide fame with his books and short stories. During these years Sam began writing short stories and poetry which betrayed his love of the raw, young state that was to hold him for the rest of his life. In 1886 he made a selection of stories which had been published in the San Francisco *Argonaut*, and from these was published a slim, and now very rare, volume entitled *Short Stories*.

One of these accounts was originally published under the title "A Christmas Carol" and later as "The First Piano in Camp." It is a story of a mining camp in southern Nevada, near Pioche, reflecting the uproar and humor of men who, instead of resting from their labors at the end of the day, ". . . sang, danced, gambled and shot one another, as the mood seized them." Another of the stories is "A Typographical Howitzer," which has become a minor classic of American humor, with Mark Twain and Dan deQuille as the main characters.

When Sam was a reporter on the Virginia City *Evening Chronicle* he began writing news stories about a Paiute Indian called Captain Bob. The first was an effort to help Bob recover a mule which had been stolen. The description of the mule (one ear gone, four brands on his body, and a game leg) was recognized by an honest rancher in Carson Valley, and the animal was rescued from the hands of a tramp. From that time on, Captain Bob felt that all things were possible through Sam Davis and the newspaper. Although the Indian couldn't read a word, he ordered a copy of the paper left regularly at his wickiup and had a literate member of the tribe read it to him every day.

Later Captain Bob began bringing game and fresh fish as gifts to the three young reporters, Davis, deQuille, and Daggett, who were batching in a shack near the newspaper office. In a story published some years later, Sam Davis told it this way:

"To keep this stream of luxury and high living flowing to the full capacity of its banks now became our main object in life. One day Dan deQuille told us, in a confidential way, that nothing so delighted a Paiute as to be considered the father of twins. We swallowed the bait, hook and all, and the next day officially announced in the paper that Captain Bob was the happy father of twins, weighing respectively ten and twelve pounds. We waited next day at the house, expecting Bob to heave in sight loaded with game. He came a little earlier than usual, with several stalwart bucks and the interpreter. He rushed in, and waving the paper aloft, shouted, 'Heep dam lie!'

"The Indians waited for no explanation, but pounced upon us bodily, clearing out the astonished staff in about five minutes. We fled through the back window, and Bob and his followers proceeded to smash the crockery and demolish the furniture, after which he left, satisfied wih his work. The damage was estimated by the landlord at sixty-five dollars, and I guessed this to be an underevaluation of at least fifty dollars.

"We ascertained that night that nothing was such a disgrace to a Paiute family as twins, it being supposed by the Indian that each twin required a separate father. Thus our game supply was cut off with one fell stroke. Yet we forgave Dan deQuille for his infamous hoax, for to such dizzy heights does some men's magnanimity soar."

WHEN he was about thirty years old, Sam Davis began work as editor of the Carson *Appeal*, and his writing began to show a more serious trend. Even so, he remained a happy-go-lucky fellow, rarely missing a chance for a good quip. When he first moved to Carson City he interviewed Sarah Bernhardt for the *Appeal*, the San Francisco *Examiner*, and the Associated Press. The actress liked him so much that, when her train was ready to leave, she kissed him on each cheek and then squarely on the mouth.

"The right cheek for the *Carson Appeal*, the left for the *Examiner;* the lips, my friend, for yourself."

Davis displayed no trace of bashfulness. "Madam," he said, "I also represent the Associated Press, which serves 380 papers west of the Mississippi River alone."

In 1880 Davis married Nellie Verrill Mighels, widow of the late owner of the *Appeal*, and assumed active control of that newspaper. He held the position until he was elected state comptroller in 1890. His step-son, Phillip Mighels, became the editor at that time, but Sam continued writing for the paper as long as he lived. He served Nevada as comptroller for two terms and as publicity agent for four years more.

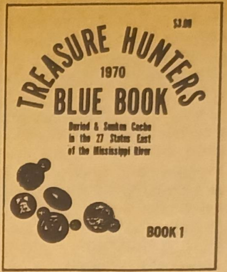
As Sam grew older he acquired the title of "The Sagebrush Oracle," since some of his contemporaries said he was a better speaker than writer. This was particularly emphasized at a banquet in honor of the pioneers of Carson Valley. Although the most eloquent men of the state were present and taking part in the event, Sam's speech was acknowledged by all to be the hit of the evening.

On the occasion of the introduction of electric power on the Comstock Lode, the committee in charge of the banquet took pains to send for a famous speaker from San Francisco to do the honors. Davis was not on the list of speakers but was called on for a few remarks. When he had finished his poetic and eloquent tribute to "light," the audience realized that Sam had delivered the only speech worth reproducing in print. It has since been republished as a masterpiece of elocution. This single paragraph will serve as a sample of the whole:

"It plants the first blush upon the cheek of dawn; with brush of gold upon the glowing canvas of the west it tells the story of the dying day. At its mere whim and caprice it causes a thousand pillars of light to leap from the sullen seas that surge about the Pole, and on its shimmering loom it weaves the opalescent tapestries of the Aurora to band against the dark background of the Arctic night."

While campaigning for state comptroller, Sam made an intensive study of the revenue system of Nevada. After his election, he waged an aggressive war upon interests which were escaping their just portion of taxation. Sam was a man of tremendous vitality and apparently quite fearless when it came to attacking political bigwigs.

He was influential in the organization of the Silver Party, and in an editorial stated: "It's time to raise the standard of revolt against the Republican Party for its demonetizing the main product of Nevada's industry." He was derided by his late associates, but evidence of success came in 1894 when he and every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other nominee of the Silver Party were elected. He ran for a third term in 1898, but was defeated by the Republicans. Even so, by that time not only his own state, but the whole West was fighting on the same political lines.

WHILE holding the office of comptroller Sam threw the New York Life Insurance Company out of Nevada because its president, John McCall, contributed a quarter-of-a-million dollars of the stockholders' money to the national Republican campaign fund. He wired a demand for McCall's resignation and a restoration of the money before the company could do business in Nevada. The company treated it as a joke, but finally asked that Sam Davis come to New York and give the company a certificate of solvency, as his order had impaired their credit in Europe.

Nevada's governor ordered Sam east and when he called at the office he was taken out to lunch before the group got down to business. The place where Sam dined was one of splendor and luxury, and he was given *carte blanche* to eat there with his friends during his stay in New York.

Sam declined the proffered hospitality and stated that his mission in New York was not to inspect the cafes, but to look into the management of the insurance company. He stayed with his original proposition that McCall must resign, pay back the quarter-of-a-million of stockholders' money donated to the McKinley campaign fund and adopt a resolution by the board of directors, "forever taking the big insurance companies out of politics." Before he left New York every demand by the Insurance Commission of Nevada was met.

Later on, after the San Francisco fire when a number of insurance companies were wavering on the line between meeting their obligations or going into bankruptcy, Davis issued an ultimatum that any company welching in San Francisco could do no business in Nevada. It forced over thirty companies into line, and insurance men have said that this order, made just in time, saved property owners of San Francisco over seven million dollars.

SAM DAVIS retired from active politics in 1908 to begin working on his *History of Nevada*, which was published in 1913. And he still wrote editorials for the *Appeal* in which he revealed the humor and pathos of daily doings around the capitol. In a 1912 issue he wrote:

"We have a very forceful Governor in this State. While loafing around outside his office waiting for him to conclude an interview with a skuldugerous promoter, I heard Governor Sparks say, 'I guess we are all through with the business you have to transact, sir. There is the door.' Whereupon, the person addressed made a hasty exit and slid through the door with the air of a man who wanted to escape being kicked through."

While he continued to write editorials and an occasional poem, Sam Davis spent the greater part of his time during his last years working with his prized Holstein cattle on his farm north of Carson City. He was the first to import this breed to Nevada and took great pride in his herd.

In August 1917, his right leg was amputated, preceded in July by a stroke of paralysis. Sam never recovered from this illness and died on March 18, 1918. An obituary in the New York *Times* of that date reported: "The death of Sam Davis removes one of the last of that bright galaxy of luminaries who had much to do with the shaping of the newspaper life of the West."

Davis did leave an imprint on Nevada, and was a far-sighted advocate of sound development of the state he loved and about which he wrote so eloquently in this poem, "The Lure of the Sagebush."

Have you ever scented the sage-bush
 that mantles Nevada's plain?
If not, you have lived but half your life,
 And that half lived in vain.

You may tread the halls of pleasure,
 where the lamps of folly shine,
'Mid the sobbing of sensuous music
 And the flow of forbidden wine.

But when the revel is over
 And the dancers turn to go,
You will long for a draught of her crystal streams
 That spring from her peaks of snow.

And when you die you will want a grave
 Where the Washoe zephyr blows,
With the green of the sage-bush above your head,
 What need to plant a rose!

The Frenchmen's Colorado Gold

(Continued from page 22)

ling. The Frenchmen worked all summer long, purportedly collecting five million dollars worth of bullion. By what standards this amount was determined is questionable.

In any event, up until late fall the Frenchmen got along well with the few Ute Indians who came around. When the chiefs asserted their claim to the vast territory they were paid a small fee in trade goods. But the Frenchmen were quite unaware of the sudden and early storms to which the San Juans were subjected, and were caught in one. It lasted for ten days. In the terrible sub-zero cold a number of the workers froze to death. All mining was suspended and the party waited for clearing weather in order to leave. Their food supply, which had been supplemented by wild game, was depleted. There would be buffalo eastward, however, so they did not worry too much on that score.

When the blizzard did halt they packed up and left Treasure Mountain for Wolf Creek Pass. This ancient route of the Utes was filled so deep with snow that they could not break through. Indeed, it was still snowing in the rugged heights. Retreating to the cabins, the Frenchmen cached the enormous amount of yellow bars in three places. By then, they were eating their livestock and it was a question whether or not they could ever get out at all.

The final decision was to head south for the Spanish settlements to survive the winter. They set out in that direction, passing the site of Pagosa Springs on another stormy day. In that camp a sudden Ute attack cost the lives of several Frenchmen and half the party's livestock. Struggling on they managed to reach Taos, somehow satisfying Spanish authorities there with reasons for their presence. They still had enough trade goods and trinkets of cheap jewelry to support themselves by barter and re-outfit when spring came in 1791.

WITH a few more small mules bought from the Spaniards and Indians they started back north. Formed by several tributaries, the San Juan River heads against the majestic San Juan mountain range. One of the tributaries derives from canyon streams running out of Treasure Mountain which stands surly and grim a short distance southwest of Wolf Creek Pass. Not until the Frenchmen were on the upper San Juan where it narrows did they experience any trouble.

Apparently, during their absence, the Utes had decided to wipe out the white strangers. This decision was instigated by Chief Saguache (the first of several by that name), who had been soundly defeated in battle by New Mexico Governor Juan Bautista de Anza in the 1780s. The Frenchmen were forced into a semi-permanent camp on the San Juan. About 200 were suffering from smallpox which had been contracted in Taos. Others were ill from a strange fever caused by unclean food and poor living conditions.

Saguache led his warriors in three raids against them during the eight weeks spent there. The almost helpless party hardly could do more than defend the main camp. Most of their livestock was run off by the Indians. Every day fresh graves were dug for the dead. By the time the smallpox had run its course about 150 men remained alive. Weak and with only a few head of stock left, they struggled out of the small river valley onto Treasure Mountain.

It was immediately apparent that they could not possibly get out with all the gold. To make the situation even more hopeless Saguache followed them there. In an early morning attack around eighty of the party were slain and all the rude log cabins burned to the ground. What little livestock remained was run off by the Utes. Further delay meant annihilation.

The survivors made up packs and with their few operable firearms started east in a thin walking line. Before they were out of Colorado into Kansas, the Comanches struck them. Twenty more men were slain before they could fort up.

When they later struggled on to the plains, thousands of buffaloes were encountered, and the Frenchmen stayed in camp several days gorging themselves while making ready what meat they

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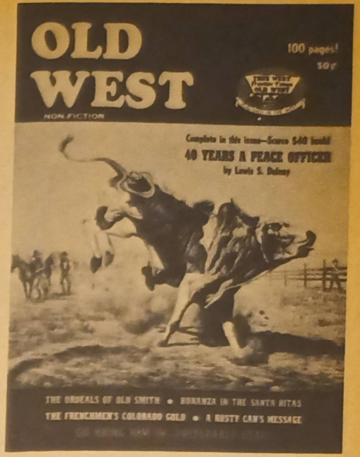
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could pack. They were out of other provisions, including salt, but managed to kill more buffalo as they went along. Progress was slow but they had food until half-way across Kansas, after which the remaining twenty-odd survivors were soon destitute again.

Weakened by hunger, they could scarcely make three miles a day. As related later, lots were drawn to select a man to be slaughtered and eaten so that the rest might live a little longer. Finally three skeleton-like survivors crawled into the village of St. Louis as established by August Choteau (not the later St. Louis in a different location).

After recovering from their ordeal they proceeded down the Mississippi to New Orleans. A map was drawn of the gold caches, with specific instructions, and sent to France. So far as can be determined no other expedition of Frenchman ever tried to recover the gold.

MEANWHILE, back in New Mexico, what the Frenchmen had been doing in Colorado leaked to authorities through a *señorita* who had been courted by one of the party. When this information was reported to Governor Fernando de la Concha he immediately formed a force of 250 soldiers, citizens and Indian allies. Some time had elapsed since the Frenchmen had departed. More was wasted by the slow-traveling expedition.

On the San Juan during a brief skirmish with Utes, several Indians were captured. They had been with Saguache in the attack on the Frenchmen and led the Spaniards to the destroyed camp. There are Spanish records in the New Mexico archives relating events of Governor Concha's expedition north. But nowhere is there a statement that they found more than graves on the San Juan River, and the burned cabin sites.

A century later, however, one of the three caches was found. It was first thought to have been looted by the Utes or the Comanches.

The Little Annie Mine was discovered by John Esmond in 1873. Subsequently it was sold to Senator Thomas Bowen and this heaviest producer of the San Juans made him wealthy. After the mining town of Summitville grew up in the valley below, his superintendent was Leon Montroy.

One day William Yule, a noted Colorado frontiersman and pioneer, contacted him and showed him a traced map. Yule, originally from St. Louis, said that it was of the original Frenchmen's map which had been dispatched to France. Montroy had been contacted because he knew the mountain areas better than any other man.

From the map it appeared that there would be no difficulty finding the caches of gold, but since help would be required, Montroy brought into the deal two trusted friends, Asa Poore and A. T. Stolsteimer. With livestock and tools from the Little Annie Mine, the four men left Summitville one summer day for Treasure Mountain.

After three weeks of intensive searching for the four markers as identified on the map, they had located only two. The first was a grave some distance from the main plot of graves on the ancient campsite. It was discovered by pure accident. Poore saw a piece of white sticking out of the ground, which on being touched crumbled to dust. It was a human bone and when the others were summoned and the spot spaded out, several other pieces of the skeleton were found; also a rusted blunderbuss.

This was the indicated grave. Three degrees towards Polaris should have been the other marker, and it was there. After scrambling over ridges, a lot of rock piles and a few narrow defiles, they found a flat-surfaced stone embedded in the ground. On it was inscribed in French what Yule had already translated from the map: "Forty-five degrees bearing southwest to the third marker was excavated the third cache." Everything pertaining to the fabulous caches was stated in degrees. Apparently the Frenchmen had a brainy civil engineer along.

Montroy had to return to the mine and was absent two weeks. When he returned the other three had found exactly nothing. Disgusted and deeply discouraged they had lost all hope. Montroy cheered them up by announcing that he would locate the first cache.

Beginner's luck, fool's luck, or what, when he started down a forty-five degree angle from the inscribed stone marker he did exactly that.

What he actually did was to give each man a steel rod with which to prod the ground. Stretched out in a line, wide apart, on the third day it was Montroy himself who struck pay dirt. Or what at first they believed to be pay dirt.

Montroy's rod point hit a series of flat stones. When they cleared the surface, a covering approximately six feet square was disclosed. Removal of the first few flat stones caused the rotted hardwood timbers below to collapse. When the hole was cleaned of this considerable debris it proved to be ten feet deep and completely empty of any valuables.

All four men were convinced for the rest of their lives that they had found one cache. It had been robbed, but why was the covering replaced? Greatly discouraged, they spent the remainder of the summer searching for the other markers. In between times Montroy returned to the Little Annie, attended to necessary business, and brought back supplies. As fall approached, even Yule—more enthusiastic than any other of them—gave up hope of finding the gold.

On what was supposed to have been the final night a gold bar was found partly out of the soil in the grass at what they believed was the actual site of the Frenchmen's cabins. It weighed nearly forty pounds. That induced them to spend two more weeks in fruitless searching. Finally abandoning all hope, the men hid the grave to where it could never be found by others. The flat stone marker was dynamited into fragments and the lined cache blasted completely in.

SO FAR as is known, none of them ever returned to hunt for the Frenchmen's gold on Treasure Mountain. Montroy moved on from the Little Annie, a mine which disgorged its final values about 1893.

Poore left and never returned to Colorado. Yule lived the balance of his life in the state and was a prominent and worthwhile citizen.

Stolsteimer was in Denver sometime in 1895, where he met a friend, Adrian White. In his cups and still retaining bitter disappointment over his inability to find the Frenchmen's gold, Stolsteimer told White the entire story of his connection with it. White, a tall, red-bearded man of forty, displayed a little interest.

Stolsteimer then sketched the map of the area from memory and located on it the two markers which had been found. When his friend finished talking White said, "Maybe the Spaniards found that gold before 1800. I'll look into it."

He had prospected around Cripple Creek and had located and sold several claims. At this time he had finances sufficient to do as he pleased. His first move was to go to Santa Fe. There he learned nothing from ancient Spanish documents and proceeded to Albuquerque. To his great disappointment he found that more than half of all the old Spanish records in the Governors Palace had been deliberately destroyed by occupying American troops in 1845 on orders of the commanding general.

White's only discovery of anything important was in the mission church of San Felipe de Neri. A stack of dust-covered documents was sifted through by a priest he hired to read them. In one of them, according to White's account published in 1910, one small item was a report of Governor Concha's having returned from the San Juan Mountains after pursuing the Frenchmen who had aroused his suspicions. Concha had uncovered a cache after his quarry fled east. In it had been 88 robes (buffalo?), fifty pounds of powder, a number of metal tools and nothing more. White was convinced this was the cache discovered by Yule and his partners. Not Indians but Spaniards had robbed it.

White went north to Treasure Mountain, hunted that fall, and holed up at nearby Summitville for the winter. The town was then practically deserted. In the spring he returned and the sites of the two destroyed markers were definitely determined. Working from them he located the third to the southwest, a corner of the square. From that point on he could never uncover any evidence of the cached gold bars.

Since then no startling discoveries on Treasure Mountain have been reported.

The Summitville *Nugget* until its demise sometimes published short items about men hunting for the Frenchmen's gold but if found, such a great hoard of gold could not possibly have been kept secret.

Hunters of lost and buried treasures instead of wasting time on those of spurious origin would accomplish more by searching for this one. It is no longer in the realm of fantasy but has been proven to actually exist.

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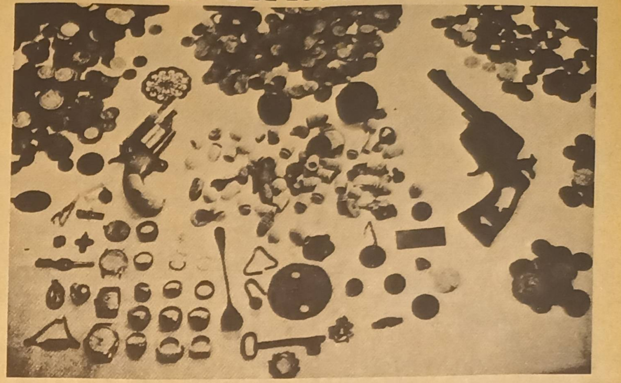

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TRAILS GROWN DIM

Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose of this service since its beginning, preference is given writers whose trails have grown dim out West: lost ancestors and relatives who were sheriffs, pioneers, Forty-niners, muleskinners, cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters, and so on. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

Matador Ranch Cowboys

I am trying to locate cowboys who worked on the Matador Ranch. I have a friend who was working there around 1925 and he would like to hear from any friends. His name is Al Couch and his address is 676 C Street, Brawley, California 92227.—Nettie Couchman, Box 490, Brawley, California 92227

James Hughes

I have in my files about fifty documents from the Texas State Library concerning a Dr. James Hughes, M.D. On these copies are some noteworthy autographs of some of the first officials of the Republic of Texas. I have his commission as Assistant Surgeon on Galveston Island in 1836.

I feel that somewhere there is someone who would be interested in these papers and I would like to give them to such a person. On the face of the evidence in these papers, the Dr. James Hughes, M.D., is not the same James Hughes I am seeking. My only evidence of the military service of my James Hughes is a land grant from the Texas Land Office to his heirs.

The land grant reads in part, "For having been massacred with Colonel Fannin's command at Goliad, Texas in 1836," so evidently this Dr. Hughes is not my man. If anyone reading this is interested in or has knowledge of this matter, I wish they would please communicate with me.—D. R. Roberts, 1514 Stanford, Houston, Texas 77019

Waller-Utley-Gartney

The Utley and Gartney families lived in Illinois or Indiana in the late 1800s. Emma Utley married David Louis Waller. She had three brothers: Enos, Louis and Lemley. They lived around McLeansboro, and Grayville, Illinois and near Griffin, Indiana.

Some of the Wallers operated some sort of trade on the Wabash River. Emma and her family and one or two of her brothers came to Port, Oklahoma, in pioneer days. They came by wagon-train—seven wagons and one buggy. It took almost three months.

There was a Waller Baptist Church at Port. They lived in dugouts until they could build houses. Any information about them will be appreciated.—Mrs. J. D. Shumake, 1615 South 25th Street, Waco, Texas 76707

Lars Jornevik

My great-great-grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Lars Jornevik, were murdered by Indians in the Belmont massacre near Jackson, Minnesota in 1862. A son was left unharmed. Later on, neighbors who had hidden in a field found and raised this child. He went by the name of Larson.

I would like to hear from anyone who can give me information about the Belmont massacre or anyone who may be a relative of Lars Jornevik.—Mrs. Sylvan Nelson, Canton, Minnesota 55922

R. O. Jackson

I'd like information on my great-grandfather, R. O. (Robert?) Jackson. About 1900-1905, he spent a night with each of his children. Then, in the morning he would tell each one good-bye—that he was leaving. They didn't believe it, but after the last child was visited, he really did simply disappear. They heard of him one time after that: That he lived on a river in Arizona and trapped. He was a trapper by trade.

He was a great big Frenchman with two outstanding features. He had a very bad temper, and his hair was thick, straight, and stiff. He kept it cut about an inch long all over, and it stuck out like porcupine quills.

Tradition says we are of the same lineage as General Stonewall Jackson, and I'd like to prove this. R. O. Jackson was born in Tennessee and migrated to Erath County, Texas. I don't know whether he came to Oklahoma before he went to Arizona.—Jo Vogt, RFD 3, Ada, Oklahoma 74820

Adam Fowler

My grandfather Adam Fowler (1875-1953) married Alice McBride in the early 1900s. He had brothers Lon, Dave, and George; and sisters Rand and Sena. They are said to have come to Oklahoma from White Plains or Cape Girardeau, Missouri. My great-grandparents are buried at Seminole, Oklahoma. I'd like to learn where they were from, etc.—Le Roy Youngblood Fowler, 937 N. Ross, Dewey, Oklahoma 74029

Claud E. Fuller

I would be so happy if you could help me locate Claud E. Fuller or any of his relatives. He lived in or near Brooks, Oregon in 1918 and enlisted in the navy that year. We think his people were Texans. He would be around seventy-one years old. His father was Andy Fuller, and he had a younger sister, "Boots."

I last heard from him in 1919 and can't remember the name of his ship. I have a family picture which he or any of his family should have, since there was just this one copy. I am getting near the end of the old trail and would be happier knowing they had it.

He loved this kind of magazine and told me many gold mining stories.—G. Johnston MacKevice, 1206 Dundee, Boise, Idaho 83706

Sipe Brothers

I would like to hear from anyone who knew the Sipe brothers from Eldorado Springs, Missouri. Roy was a Metropolitan Street railway motorman in Kansas City, Missouri up to 1908, when he and I went to Bellingham, Washington.

I shipped out of British Columbia for Sydney, Australia and Roy homesteaded somewhere in Montana. He should be in his 80s if alive. I returned to Australia in 1923 and again in 1967. Frank Sipe stayed in Missouri as far as I know.—Ernest C. Weber, Box 1063, Rockport, Texas 78382

Patrick Henry Ferguson

My grandfather settled in Bogata, Red River County, Texas about seventy years ago. Patrick Henry Ferguson, born 1897 or '98, married Gertrude Bogan and had five sons and two daughters. One son, Billy Mac, was killed by a baseball when he was fourteen or fifteen years old. The other sons are Tom, Jim, Travis and Henry Gresham (my father). The daughters are Gladys and Magdalene. I would like to hear from anyone who has known this family.—Mrs. Harold Harris, Box 43, Pecos, Texas 79772

Lankford Family

Fourteen members of the Lankford family came to America from London, England, possibly in the early 1860s. My grandfather (Nathan) was four at the time; he later studied medicine at Harvard, but gave it up. He married a girl from Arkansas named Elizabeth Ann. They had three girls and five boys.

My father, John Arthur, was born some place in Texas in 1889 and is deceased. Richard lives close to Denver. Wesley is deceased. Uncles Wesley and Jess spent some time in the service. I'm told Grandfather Nathan was a Texas Ranger, and also my father, John Arthur.

My grandfather homesteaded in Oklahoma close to Maud, where he and my grandmother both died. Aunt Grace lives in Shawnee, Oklahoma. Several years ago she met some Lankfords in the Eastern states who could be relatives. We'd like to hear from anyone knowing anything about this family.—Ann Pipkin, 4007 W. Holly Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85009

Ogden-Tindle-Dillahunty

I am interested in all descendants of David and Frank Ogden, who moved from Franklin County, Alabama in 1833 to Saline and Madison Counties, Arkansas. Some of their descendants may still live in Bosque County, Texas as some of David's sons moved there in 1867. Did any relatives of William Tindle, who was in Oxark, Arkansas in 1842, go to Texas? I am interested also in corresponding with any member of the Dillahunty family.—W. Henry Ogden Jr., 1801 Ardath, Wichita Falls, Texas 76301

Tom Scurlock

My father, Tom Scurlock, lived in the Panhandle of Texas and Oklahoma until 1929 or 1930 when he and my mother parted. Her maiden name was Irene Cecile Bigham. I'd like to hear from anyone with any information.—Mrs. Melveda Scurlock Southards, 118 South 8th Avenue, Yakima, Washington 98902

Baker-Morgan

Benjamin Franklin Morgan was born in 1833 in Tennessee. He married Mary Baker in 1873 near Jacksonville, Oregon. I'd like to know his birthplace in Tennessee, the names of his parents, etc.—Cora McVicker, 2 Coburg Road, Eugene, Oregon 97401

Nona Yates

Nona Yates was, I believe, born in Woodville, Mississippi. Her father, Rodgers Yates, was drowned in the overflow of the Mississippi River in the '20s at Vicksburg. His body was never found. I would appreciate any information anyone can give me.—Mrs. A. L. Mallick, 413 South Archer, Henrietta, Texas 76365

Detamore-Shull

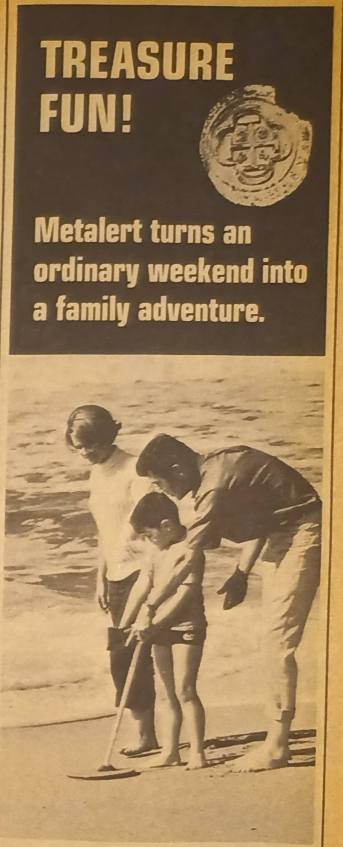
I would like to learn anything pertaining to the family of William Detamore and wife, Margaret, who lived on North River in Augusta County, Virginia in or near Lick Run around 1800. Also, anything of George Shull, who lived on Lick Run, northwest part of Augusta County, Virginia around 1790; and on George Shull, born in Virginia, 1803. I would like information also on George Shull, born in Virginia, April 11, 1817, who married Nancy J. Detamore.—Kenneth J. Shull, Box 689, Benson, Arizona 85602

John Olmstead's Parents

I am searching for the parents of my great-grandfather, John Olmstead, born in the early 1800s in New York. He moved to Jackson County, Indiana about 1828, farmed, and married Esther Beedle or Beadle. They had seven children: Jed, Sarah, Luther, Elizabeth, Alonzo, Mandy, and Samuel. John's socially-conscious family, unable to discourage his marriage, disowned him completely. John and Esther died before 1850 without giving their children any clues to John's family background. John had two brothers, Jedadiah and Lewis; and a sister, Mahaley (Mrs. Jeff Cox). They all lived in Bartholomew County, Indiana about 1830. I would appreciate very much hearing from any descendants.—Mrs. Bob Shirley, 4300 Newland, Wheatridge, Colorado 80033

Gustav Schwabe

My grandfather had a brother who came to the United States between 1875-1890. He had three or four sons who might have seen service in the Spanish-American War. We found a picture taken in Peoria, Illinois about 1890. My grandfather's name was Gustav Schwabe. He lived in Varel, State of Oldenburg, Germany. We do not know any first names. Any information will be appreciated.—Paul Schwabe, Box 361, Castaic, California 91310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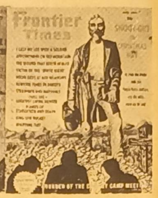
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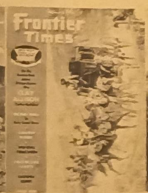
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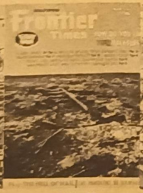
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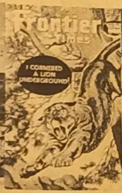
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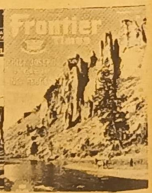
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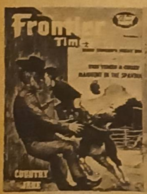
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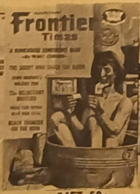
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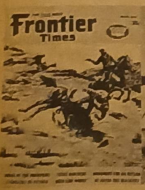
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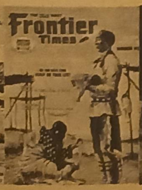
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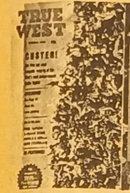
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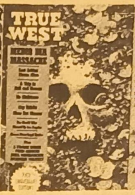
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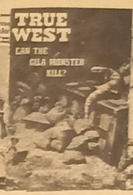
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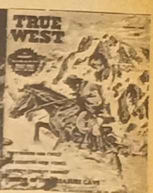
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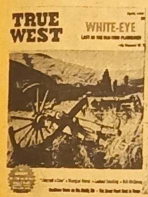
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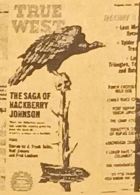
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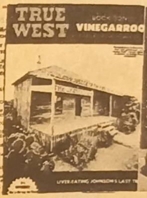
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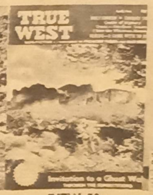
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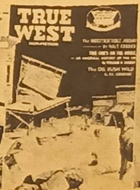
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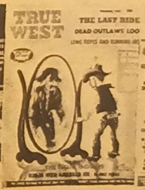
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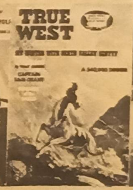
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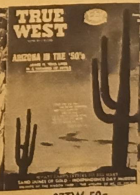
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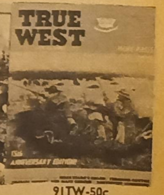
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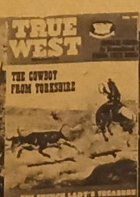
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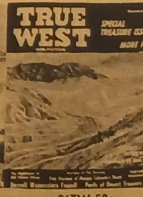
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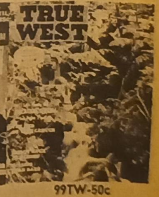
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Bonanza in the Santa Ritas

(Continued from page 34)

Ed Schieffelin visited Total Wreck in 1884 and, while there, ruefully remarked, "I saw that ledge three or four years ago, but passed it up as unimportant." But the life of Total Wreck was short, and after producing some $500,000 from rich surface ore, the mine petered out rapidly in 1884. Subsequent spasmodic operations boosted the total output to about $750,000, although Total Wreck did not function as a town after the removal of its post office in 1890.

MANY of the miners leaving the uniquely named town returned to the Santa Ritas when Helvetia hit its growth. Strike after strike was made, and the Helvetia Company decided to build a reduction plant to handle the stockpile of ore. Materials were ordered, men put to work, and a smelter of 200-tons capacity was soon in operation. From all quarters came miners and prospectors, promoters and gamblers, badmen, psuedo-badmen, and the usual assortment of women. Some lived in tents, others slapped up shacks from bear grass, stones, packing cases and pieces of canvas. Later, substantial buildings of adobe began to appear, the town was laid out in streets and lots, and the community of Helvetia was organized. On December 12, 1899, a post office was established, and Charles M. Coon became the first postmaster.

Oscar Buckalew, prominent store and freight line owner, established a stage line between Tucson and Helvetia in 1896. An item in the Tucson *Citizen* stated, "The Buckalew stages go the most direct route to Helvetia Mining Camp. Stages leave the Occidental Hotel at 8 a.m. Tues., Thurs., and Sat., returning on alternate days. This is the best equipped stage line going out of Tucson. Fare: one way, $2.00, round trip, $4.00. Oscar Buckalew, prop."

On January 4, 1900, the *Arizona Republican* reported, "Helvetia, thirty-five miles from Tucson while the youngest mining camp, is one of the most prosperous. The Helvetia Mining Company owns about forty mining claims, and in the last year has expended upwards of a million dollars in development work. A narrow gauge railroad, several miles in length, has been constructed and equipped with rolling stock, and a 200-ton smelter is now in operation. . . . [The town] now has a population of over 500."

A few days later, the same newspaper commented, "The company at Helvetia has promised to build a school very soon. In the meantime a room given by General Manager Seager will be used. There are 40 to 50 children of school age in town and the citizens have agreed that they shall have their chance for an education." The school was built as agreed—a large, unpainted frame building which saw service not only as a school but as a town hall, a place for social gatherings, and as a Protestant church whenever an itinerant minister happened along.

Headframe at a Helvetia mine.

Encouraging news from the area continued to appear in the *Arizona Republican*. "The Helvetia camp has had a remarkable growth and is the home of some 600 people," it reported on April 1. "The company [Helvetia Copper Co.] operates a baby gauge railroad, which carries the ore from the mines to the smelter, and the camp on the whole has a most substantial appearance. . . . Seven miles from Helvetia, in Stone Cabin Canyon, W. B. McCleary has a prospect which gives promise of becoming one of the most important producers in Southern Arizona. In Mr. McCleary's Star Pointer mine, which has a depth of something over 50 feet, free gold has been found in the gold-bearing rock, and Mr. McCleary is not certain that he is developing a copper mine, which he started out to do. The copper values run high in the pay-streak, but the presence of free gold bids fair to make that metal the important product of the mine."

THE clamor for a railroad grew louder every day, and it was said a road could be built on the basis of $8,000 a mile. New strikes were reported almost daily. All during the month of August, the *Republican* sent forth its cheer. "A three-foot vein of bonanza rock has been discovered in the Old Baldy, a few miles south of here. The find was made by Fred Maish, well known mining man. Excitement prevails and a new rush is on. The Helvetia Company will build a railroad to connect with the Southern Pacific at Vail's Station, 18 miles from the camp.

"Judge S. W. Purcell has opened up a magnificent vein of silver-lead ores in the Santa Rita range. The vein is the largest that has been discovered, and the mine will soon become a profitable producer.

"The Colonel Brodie, seven miles from Helvetia, discovered in May by W. B. McCleary and George H. Smalley, is developing rapidly. The vein shows increasing width as depth is attained, and Mr. McCleary thinks they have struck a rich ore shoot. It dips toward a great quartzite reef which penetrates the mountain a distance of four miles. The ore is found in slate and is blind excepting a six-inch outcropping where discovery was made. From six inches the vein has widened to three feet and gradually increases as sinking progresses.

"Negotiations are pending for construction of a mill on Dr. Mata's famous Del Oro claims. The doctor has done a lot of development in three years, resulting in the finding of large bodies of gold ore. Word comes from Helvetia that a tremendous body of ore has been struck at 400 feet in the Isle Royal."

With important strikes being made throughout the area, it seemed Helvetia was destined to become one of the Territory's most important mining towns. For a frontier mining camp it was very well-behaved—gunfights and other violent affrays were held to a minimum by the deputy marshal, Tom Jones, a fearless lawman who policed the town at night and on weekends. Big Tom also worked for the Helvetia Company as a diamond drill man and before coming to Helvetia had been a federal cattle inspector.

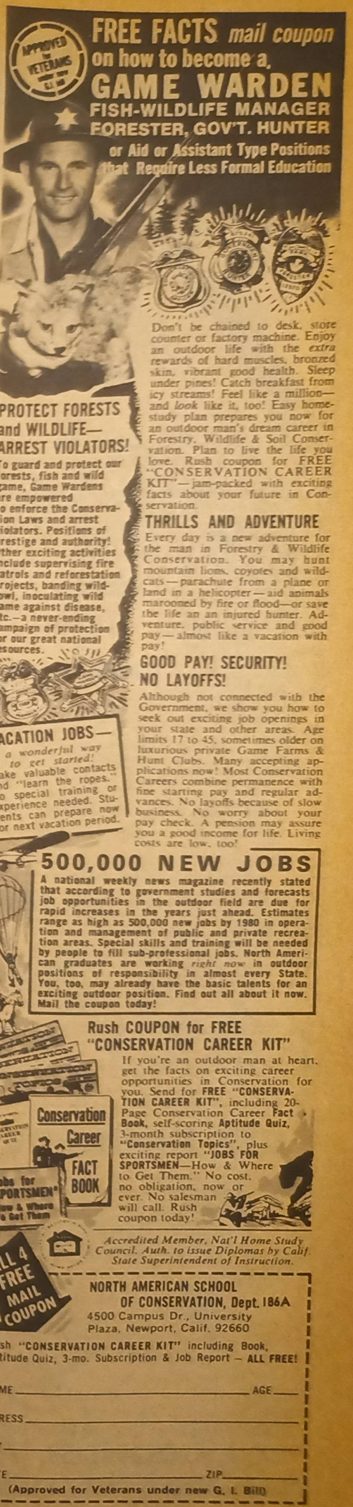
Then the wheel of fortune reversed itself. On December 9, 1900, the big smelter caught fire and was totally destroyed. Over 250 men were thrown out of work. The company attempted to continue operations by hauling untreated ore eighteen miles to the Southern Pacific Railroad which carried it on to the El Paso smelter. But it was a losing proposition and the New Jersey men soon gave up and shut down the mines. Although a few independent mines and one small smelter still were operating, many citizens were forced to leave and seek work elsewhere.

The stricken community carried on until 1903, when a group of Tucson capitalists acquired the claims. The new owners rebuilt the smelter to larger capacity and put crews to work cleaning and draining the mines. Blowing-in of the new smelter was a joyous occasion for the town, and a grand celebration with free champagne, dancing and all the trimmings heralded the event.

Several new strikes were made and Helvetia entered its greatest prosperity. On July 30, 1906, the Tucson *Citizen* reported the richest find in the district's history. "C. T. Roberts, superintendent of Louis Zechendorf's Omega Mine, brought news of a big strike in the Helvetia Mine at the 800-foot level. This strike will mean an additional boom for Helvetia which has been coming to the front with rapid strides and which promises to give Silver Bell a pretty race for the honor of becoming the largest mining camp in the county. . . . The 200-ton smelter is being operated to its full capacity and fine matte is being turned out. Larger shipments are being made from the Tip Top Mine. . . . Last year the Tip Top shipments aggregated 10,000 tons, and this year they will be much larger. The Tip Top is owned by Philadelphia parties."

THE long-hoped-for railroad might have made the town one of Arizona's greatest mining camps but, for some reason, the proper strings were not pulled and Helvetia's dream never materialized.

On April 17, 1910, Oscar Buckalew was murdered at his ranch home in Helvetia. Buckalew, a prominent citizen and one of the early pioneers, had come to Arizona in 1860. He had entered the freighting business; in 1867, he had been shot in the leg in a fight with Indians at the Mowry Mine. His wound, due to lack of medical attention, had developed gangrene and his leg had been ampu-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tated at the knee. Buckalew had moved to Helvetia in 1900 and despite his handicap, become prosperous. The whole community was shocked by his brutal death.

Buckalew had been found in a chair in his home with a bullet hole in the back of his head. The assassin had fired through a window from outside the house. A .38 bullet was found inside the body when an autopsy was performed. Helvetia's deputy, Frank Culen, made a preliminary investigation and then called in Pima County's district attorney Dick Benton, Sheriff John Nelson, and his chief deputy Luke Short, from Tucson.

A suspicious Mexican was picked up in Nogales but his gun was not a .38 and he was released for lack of evidence. Three Helvetia men of unsavory reputation were arrested, questioned, and turned loose when authorities failed to pin anything on them. Lawmen made every effort to solve the crime but the mysterious gunman was not apprehended.

The following year, a bad slump in copper-silver prices caused all major Helvetia mines to close. Gradually the people drifted away until only a handful remained to struggle on with some small operations. Finally, on December 12, 1921, the post office was discontinued and Helvetia was done as an organized community.

When I was there, some years ago, I found a half-dozen frame shacks standing silent and lonely. Part of the old adobe company boarding house-grocery store still stood, having been repaired and made into a combined office-storeroom by the Banner Mining Company. Old workings and dangerous open shafts were everywhere. I spent several hours prowling them and poking through old rubble heaps looking for relics, but didn't find anything worthwhile.

Late that afternoon, I met Bob Ellison, an employe of Anaconda, who told me that the mighty copper firm owned the area except for Zechendorf's three Omega claims. Bob pointed out the mines which had contributed most of the district's wealth. "And that," he said pointing to the collapsed rubble of an old building, "was Helvetia's largest bistro. It was a combined saloon-gambling den, and had a bevy of good-time girls."

Bob refused at that time to commit himself on Anaconda's future operations in the area, but exploration was being done.

Go Bring Him In—Dead!

(Continued from page 37)

Lorenzo Delgado of San Miguel County. Delgado swore in Con Jackson of Las Vegas, formerly of Trinidad, as a deputy and guide. The papers reported that Jackson was a famed manhunter but a thorough search fails to confirm this contention. However, Con Jackson knew the country and the people. With the addition of Rafael Branch, a deputy sheriff of Mora County, the posse was ready to corner their quarry.

The January 8, 1917 edition of Las Vegas *Optic* gave an account of the running gunfight which followed: "Jackson began operations by making a careful survey of the country in which Lucero was reported to be hiding, which is located in Mora County, probably 50 miles [30 miles] from Las Vegas. He decided that the best way to approach the cabin of Lucero's aunt, where the man had been reported as staying, was to climb over the mountain from the rear rather than come up the valley in front. Plans were all made and Friday afternoon (Jan. 5), the party surrounded the cabin. As the shadows were growing long, it was thought that Lucero, who had been reported to be in the hills, would have returned before the time the pickets were set out. This belief was a mistake, however.

"About 7:30 o'clock, Lucero, unsuspecting that he was ambushed, approached from the mountains. He was within a few feet of one of the members of the party before the latter discovered him. "*Quien es?*" (Who is it?) demanded Lucero, drawing his gun. The man addressed ducked quickly, and it was well he did so, as a bullet from Lucero's revolver passed immediately over his head. Jackson, who was standing near, opened fire on Lucero, whom he saw by the flash of the latter's gun. Lucero also got a range on Jackson, and sent a bullet so close to the latter's head that a small limb on a tree at his side was broken off. The firing became general and Lucero took to flight."

(The above is an excerpt from a full-column report in the *Optic* and is continued to page 5. But because of World War I, only the first and second pages of the 1917 editions were bound. Probably the remaining six pages were donated to a paper drive of the time.)

However, Lucero's story to Sheriff Patricio Sanchez filled in the remaining details of the gunfight at Cebolla Canyon. When Lucero encountered the first picket, Deputy Rafael Branch, he had thought it was his friend, Ramon Martinez, and hailed him as described above. As soon as Lucero realized his mistake, he fired at the fleeing deputy. The bullet tore through the flesh on the inside of Branch's thigh and put him out of the fight.

Lucero continued to fire at Jackson and company until he emptied his gun. In his subsequent flight he discovered an uprooted tree across a small brook and sought shelter there, partially submerged in water. He testified that he remained at this spot throughout the night and when he finally left the next morning he found that his feet were severely frozen.

THUS BEGAN the terrible torture he was to endure until he surrendered on April 19, 1917. He knew he had been betrayed by someone in Mora and that he had to be on the move constantly. By the middle of April, Lucero was in such a state of mental and physical fatigue that he couldn't recall much of his experiences for the remaining three months of his flight. He remembered that he avoided the bloodhounds which were brought in from Trinidad by Sheriff Kane of Las Animas County and the fact that he found an abandoned cabin well-supplied with straw. There he cut off his shoes from his frozen feet and covered himself with straw. He thought that he stayed there for four days before venturing forth for food. Details of the remaining days of his hiding were lost in fear and pain.

This is just a sampling of what you will find in the August 1970 Issue.

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Two days after his surrender to Sheriff Sanchez, Lucero was taken to the county jail at Las Vegas, while Harry West and Sheriff Kane obtained extradition papers from the Governor of Colorado for Lucero's return to stand trial for the killing of Frank West. The trial began on July 9, 1917. Lucero was defended by O. H. Dasher. The prosecution was composed of District Attorney J. H. Hawley, assisted by Henry Hunter. Judge J. C. Wiley presided.

The jury was impaneled on the first day and at the beginning of the second day the prosecution stated its case. The *Chronicle-News* of Trinidad on July 10 interpreted the state's case in the following manner; "That Frank West having ridden in from his ranch to Delhi Station for his mail on the night of August 24, last, had met at the depot and talked with Ricardo Lucero, that an argument in Spanish had taken place, that he left the depot, and had been attacked by Isaac Sandoval and saved from possible harm by the interference of one William S. Woolery, that he later had been attacked by Ricardo Lucero, and stabbed to death while the wife of Lucero held the arms of her husband's victim is the sum and substance of the case which was completed by the state in district court today."

In the opening statements for the defense the *Chronicle-News* reported: "That Frank West was in a quarrelsome mood, had argued with Lucero and had applied an epithet and had threatened to knock Lucero's brains out on the railroad track, and was upon him when he was stabbed are the contentions of the defendant outlined this morning in the opening statement of the defendant's counsel, O. H. Dasher."

William Woolery testified that he heard West and Lucero arguing in the Delhi Station. Each left the station at different times but when Woolery went outside he saw West and Sandoval in an argument and he stepped between them. In so doing he turned his back on West. He then heard West gasp and upon turning around he saw that West had been stabbed and Lucero's wife was holding West with his arms pinned behind him. He also said that West was not wearing spurs.

The defense broke this testimony by proving to at least three of the jurors that a woman the size of Mrs. Lucero could not possibly have held West while her husband stabbed him. The defense held fast to the contention that Lucero killed in self-defense.

The jury retired and failed to reach a verdict, with nine for conviction and three against.

Throughout the trial Lucero was listless and visibly showed his uncontrollable fear of Harry West—a terrorized fear which had kept him running for eight months. Before the retrial came to court Ricardo Lucero attempted to take his own life by chewing the heads of a quantity of kitchen matches. The attempt failed and on September 26, 1917 a second trial was held. The attorneys were the same but now Judge A. W. McHendrie presided.

The testimony was practically the same in the second trial and the jury was deadlocked, ten to two for conviction. Throughout the trial, defense attorney O. H. Dasher endeavored to have the case dismissed but to no avail.

A third trial was held on March 18, 1918. On March 20, District Attorney Hawley entered a *nolle prosequi* in Case No. 7535, *The People vs. Ricardo Lucero*, denoting that the prosecution would proceed no further in its action to try for a conviction. In it he said, "Said case has been regularly tried to a jury on three occasions, to wit, on July 9, 1917, September 26, 1917 and March 18, 1918, and all evidence that could be adduced has been brought before said jurors and that each time the jury has disagreed and under the circumstances the undersigned move that no conviction could ever be secured."

Some think that civilization had come to the whole life of the West by the turn of the century, but Las Vegas in San Miguel County, Mora in Mora County and Tierra Amarilla in Rio Arriba County, New Mexico just didn't conform. Many stories which stretch into the early thirties have never been given public exposure—and all carry the dung and leather smell of the frontier.

The Ordeals of Old Smith

(Continued from page 15)

The party got an early start on the morning of July 13, 1827, varying the route only slightly from that of the year before. They had plenty of provisions this time and did not suffer from hunger and thirst as the men had the previous year, nor did they lose many horses. Old Smith had learned. This time he was careful to skirt the worst of the canyons, and in mid-August the Americans emerged with the Colorado River into the broad, beautiful valley of the Mohave villages.

The Mohaves seemed as friendly as they had been the year before. Jedediah "went to the place where I intended to cross the Colorado and encamped in a situation where I found good grass, with the intention of giving my horses some rest. I exchanged some horses, Bought some Corn and Beans and made a present to the Chiefs."

Francisco, the Spanish-speaking Indian youth, was still living with the Mohaves, and Gregory Ortega, the "Spaniard," no doubt had some knowledge of his native language, so Jedediah was able to communicate with his hosts, who gave no indication of hostility. Francisco informed Old Smith that shortly after he had left the Mohave villages last November a party of Spaniards and

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Americans from the Province of Sonora had appeared, coming by way of the Gila River. They had quarreled among themselves and had separated at the villages, one party going north up the Colorado, and the other taking a southeasterly direction, toward Taos and Santa Fe.

However, Francisco did not tell Jedediah the whole truth. The "Spaniards" (Mexicans) and Americans had not fallen out among themselves. They had been attacked by the Mohaves and several had been killed, after which they had split up to facilitate escape. A number of Indians had also been killed, and when Jedediah and his party arrived at their village in mid-August of 1827 they were still in a vengeful mood. Old Smith, of course, had no way of knowing this, and the Mohaves took pains to conceal their true feelings.

THE AMERICANS spent a pleasant three days among the Mohaves, eating beans, melons, and corn, and trading beads and knives for a supply of these and other staples. The horses contentedly cropped the lush grass, and the men no doubt ogled the bare-breasted Mohave maidens, whose physical attributes seem to have impressed all who gazed upon them.

Three days after their arrival at the Mohave villages, the Americans set out to cross the river and resume their journey to relieve their compatriots on the Stanislaus. The Indians had obligingly made cane grass rafts for them, and Jedediah, with eight men, was almost across when the Mohaves back on the eastern shore turned on the ten men who were preparing to cross, and in a murderous frenzy clubbed and stabbed them to death. Within seconds Gobel, Brown, Cunningham, Campbell, Deromme, Labross, Ortega, Relle, and Robiseau were dead and the two squaws made prisoner.

Jedediah and his handful of men had little time to ponder their desperate situation, for the riverbank was suddenly covered with blood-crazed Mohaves shouting their war cries and others were swimming the river to be in on the final kill. The Americans, throwing such of their supplies as would sink into the river, splashed hurriedly ashore, leaving on a sandbar a few articles which might interest the Indians long enough to delay pursuit.

A scant half mile inland, the Mohaves closed in on them. Tom Virgin was assaulted with a warclub and almost killed; Galbraith appears to have sustained a head wound. Old Smith ordered a retreat back toward the riverbank, where a thicket of cottonwoods seemed to offer the best chance for some kind of a defense. They made it, thanks to the Indians' respect for their rifles, of which they had only five.

Their situation could not have been more desperate. Of the nine men, one—Tom Virgin—was useless because of a near-fatal wound. Galbraith, their best shot, was wounded but able to carry on. They had only a few rounds of ammunition for their five rifles. Their entire food supply consisted of fifteen pounds of jerky. And if by some miracle they succeeded in extricating themselves from the almost hopeless trap, there was a 150-mile expanse of blazing desert to be crossed without water and without horses.

Critical, desperate, almost hopeless—yes. But there was no funk in these American mountain men and their young leader. Grimly they prepared for the savage onslaught. With their skinning knives they cut out an enclosure and a small breastwork, and then made lances by tying their knives to light poles. Some of the men asked Jedediah if he thought they would be able to defend themselves. "I told them I thought we would," he wrote. "But that was not my opinion."

The Mohaves circled warily, keeping out of range, howling their war chants and brandishing the murderous clubs which were known and feared "from the pueblos east of the Zuni to the western Ocean, and from the big Salt Lake in the north to the river of the Yaquis in the south." Finally a few, carried away with offensive zeal, ventured into what might possibly be range for the long-muzzled Hawkens rifles. Old Smith ordered two of his best marksmen to fire. Two shots rang out and two capering Mohaves fell dead. A third shot tumbled another badly wounded Indian into the dust. "Upon this," Jedediah wrote later, "the Indians ran off like frightened sheep and we were released from the apprehension of immediate death."

As darkness came on, the Americans stole away across the desert, carrying with them the gravely wounded Tom Virgin. All night the shattered remnant of the American expedition fled on foot across the the inhospitable desert. Isaac Galbraith could walk, but Tom Virgin had to be carried. We know very little about this *jornada* because Jedediah's laconic *Journal* is the only record we have of this third desert ordeal in a year for the young leader.

THIS TIME there were no guides and no horses. Jedediah's memory of the route of the previous year was their sole reliance. However, traveling by night and encamping by day at springs remembered from last November's crossing, they made their way across the "Salt Plain"—the Sink of the Mohave, or dry Soda Lake—and from there to "Inconstant River," the Mohave. They were tormented by thirst, but "found some relief from chewing slips of the Cabbage Pear, a singular plant which I think I have before described; very juicy although frequently found growing in the most parched and barren ground." Their dried meat had long since been eaten; the fruit of the barrel cactus was both food and drink.

They staggered on. Drifting sand obscured the trail. Men dropped, exhausted, and could not continue until water could be found and brought back to them. Eight miles up the Mohave, however, they found two horses, and shortly thereafter came upon two lodges of Paiutes. "I determined at once to secure the horses," Jedediah says bluntly. The Paiutes did not have time to run away, and, surprisingly enough, did not have to be forced to surrender the animals. They readily exchanged them for odds and ends of cloth, knives, and beads which had survived the massacre on the Colorado, and threw in some cane grass candy and a few demijohns for carrying water. A little farther on up the river the Americans came upon several lodges of a people whom Jedediah calls "Wanumas." These were Vanyumes, of a tribe now extinct; they had horses and were willing to sell two of them for the same trinkets which had bemused the Paiutes.

The party then left the Mohave and "struck directly across the Plain Nearly SSW to the Gape of the Mountains." The "Gape" was Cajon Pass. Through it they toiled, emerging to camp a short distance from the Rancho San Bernardino, an *asistencia*, or outpost, of San Gabriel Mission. "I immediately determined to kill some cattle and dry the meat to support us in our journey through the Barren country between Bernardino and the Appelaminy," wrote Jedediah. The desert had been crossed in nine and a half days as compared to sixteen the previous year.

They camped near the *rancho* for five days, recuperating from the terrible desert crossing. The overseer "sold" them several head of cattle for slaughter and enough horses to provide a mount for every man, "payment" being made in "things we had brought on our backs from the Ammuchabas," in other words, knives, beads, bits of cloth, perhaps tobacco. The horses and meat were really gifts.

It was decided that Tom Virgin was unable to travel farther and would stay at the *rancho* until he had recovered sufficiently to rejoin the party in the San Francisco Bay area. For this purpose, a good horse was left with him. Isaac Galbraith also decided to stay until his head wound had healed, and the Maine giant remained in California and became something of a legend there.

On or about September 2, Old Smith and his men left the Rancho San Bernardino en route to the base camp which had been left on the Stanislaus. The entire sixteen-day journey across part of the desert, through Tehachapi Pass, and up the San Joaquin Valley is dealt with succinctly: "I traveled the same route I had passed before and arrived on the Appelaminy [Stanislaus] and found my party on the 18th of August." He means September, but if the date of August 18 seems fixed in his mind, it is with good reason. That was the day of the Mohave massacre.

TO Harrison Rogers and the men left on the Stanislaus the previous year Old Smith now brought not the much-needed provisions but only "the intelligence of my misfortunes." However all were in good health and there was game for the taking. The Mokelumne Indians were friendly and were glad to exchange grass seed meal, currants, and raspberries for meat. While preparations were made to break camp and head for the Rockies via the Columbia and Snake River routes, Jedediah rode to Monterey, where Governor Echeandía now had his headquarters, to obtain the necessary travel permits.

At Monterey he found the dour Echeandía decidedly out of sorts. As at San Diego the previous year, Jedediah was placed under arrest and this time confined to the *calabozo*. Again, the captains of American ships in Monterey harbor interceded for him, and again the suspicious governor grudgingly permitted him to buy horses and move on, ordering him out of Mexican territory as soon as possible.

The American party, meanwhile, had moved from the camp on the Stanislaus to nearby San José Mission. From there, on December 30, they finally rode out, twenty men and two hundred and fifty horses and mules heading north up the Sacramento Valley. Behind them they left fuming Mexican authorities and crackling diplomatic communiques, as well as a trail which would soon be followed by other American trappers. After the miasma of intrigue and inefficiency they had encountered, they were indeed glad to "be returned again to the woods the river, the prairae, the Camp, and the Game."

It was raining when the expedition left San José Mission, and it was still raining on New Year's Day when they camped on the Old River branch of the San Joaquin. The rain followed them as they crossed the San Joaquin and turned north, and the rivers overflowed, transforming the country into a quagmire. The going was hard; trees had to be felled over sloughs and swollen streams to carry the goods and men, and it was necessary to construct pens on the banks of the rivers in order to get the horses and mules to swim across in any kind of order. By the 22nd of January "we were destitute of provision. Several Indians came to camp and I gave them some tobacco. They brought with them some fine salmon, some of which would weigh 15 or 20 pounds. I bought three of them and one of the men killed a deer. . . . It rained most of the day and all night."

Early in February, somewhere along the Sacramento River, Reed, the blacksmith whom Old Smith had flogged at San Gabriel, and Louis Pombert, who had joined the party on the Stanislaus, deserted. Reed was a drunk and Pombert was undependable, so they were not mourned. However, they took with them fifteen valuable traps, which reduced the number available to thirty-two.

All through February the party trapped the tributaries of the San Joaquin and Sacramento Rivers in spite of the rains, the high water, and the shortage of traps. Slowly they worked up the Calaveras, the Mokelumne, the Cosumne, and the American, rafting the sloughs, swimming the horses and mules, and doubtless cursing the omnipresent mud. Half-way up the American some regrettable trouble occurred with the Indians. Two of the trappers, Marechal and Big John Turner, saw some Indians lurking around their traps. They

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called to the Indians to come to them, but they ran instead, and the two men fired at them. One Indian was killed and another wounded. On March 1 a little Indian girl of ten or eleven was actually frightened to death by the sight of the Americans, which caused Jedediah to write sadly: "Could it be possible, thought I, that we who call ourselves Christians were such frightful objects as to scare poor savages to death!"

EARLY on the morning of March 9 the expedition ran into opposition more troublesome than Indians—namely, bears. Harrison Rogers had wounded a grizzly the previous evening, and at first light was off with John Hanna to track the beast and finish him off. A short time later Hanna rushed back to camp to say that Rogers had been badly mauled. They had found the wounded animal in a thicket and he had reared up on his hind legs and rushed them. Rogers had time to get off only one shot when the enraged bruin was on him, biting and clawing him severely before running off. Hanna had then taken a shot at him, grazing him, and this had so infuriated the animal that he had turned and rushed back at Rogers, mauling him some more.

Jedediah and several others rode back out with Hanna, found Rogers a bloody mess, and Old Smith "washed his wounds and dressed them with plasters of soap and sugar." They got him back to camp, but it was several days before he was able to mount a horse again. On April 7 Jedediah himself had two encounters with grizzlies which must have reminded him unpleasantly of the day in the Black Hills, five years before, when a bear had given him the awful scars he still bore.

On the first occasion he saved himself by a headlong plunge into a creek. On the second he was mounted when the bear charged; the frightened horse bolted, but the bear grabbed his tail and hung on for forty or fifty yards before giving up, by which time Jedediah was "quite glad to get rid of his company on any terms."

In early April the party left the Sacramento and, near the present site of the town of Red Bluff, turned northwest toward the sea. This brought the Americans into the Trinity Mountains, where they were inviting the same trouble they had experienced in the red-walled canyons of the Virgin River—trouble now magnified by the presence of more than three hundred horses. Even today this is the wildest and most inhospitable section of California and parts of it are still unexplored. The natives, too, were less friendly than they had been in the Sacramento Valley; on the evening of April 15 they showered the camp with arrows. Nine horses and two mules were badly wounded, and two Indians were shot but were dragged off by their companions.

The terrain along the Trinity and Klamath Rivers was rugged, and, in rain and snow, almost impassable. Horses drowned; others fell off precipices; many were lamed by the rocky footing. There was little game; the supply of dried meat gave out; hunger was again a daily companion for both men and animals. "My men were almost as weak as the horses for the poor venison of the country contained very little nourishment," wrote Jedediah.

On May 22 a disheartened Harrison Rogers wrote in his *Journal*: "Oh! God, may it please thee, in thy divine providence to still guide and protect us through this wilderness of doubt and fear as thou hast done heretofore, and be with us in the hour of danger and difficulty, as all praise is due to thee and not to man, oh! Do not forsake us Lord, but be with us and direct us through."

Rogers' prayer appeared to have been answered, for on May 19 they reached the ocean and at the same time got their first look at California redwoods, "the noblest trees I had ever seen being 12 or 15 feet in diameter tall straight and handsome." This was at the point known today as the Del Norte Redwoods State Park.

OLD SMITH had expected that, once the ocean was reached, it would be possible to move northward toward the Columbia along the beach. That, however, was not the case. The mountains came abruptly down to the sea, and the beach was either nonexistent or rocky and covered with brambles. It was necessary to turn inland once again and try to follow the ridges which paralleled the water. Fog was an ever-present danger, as was the intermittent rain, and between them they kept the party wet and dispirited. It was possible to make only a mile or so a day, and that only by using axe-men to clear a way along the side hills. The horses were so lame and fatigued that it was difficult to drive them, and the men were little better off.

On June 23 they crossed the present California-Oregon boundary, and shortly thereafter acquired a new member, a ten-year-old Indian boy whom the coast Indians had captured from one of the Willamette tribes and who was glad of the chance to go back toward the Willamette with the white men. On July 5 they encountered some friendly Chinook-speaking Indians who informed them that they were about ten days' travel from the "Wel Hamett."

On Friday, July 11, Rogers recorded in his *Journal* an event of which he could not have known the grim portent: "We enc. where there were some Inds. living; a number of them speak Chinook; 70 or 80 in camp; they bring us fish and berries and appear friendly; we buy those articles from them at a pretty dear rate. Those Indians call themselves Omp quch."

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caught him, tied him up, and threatened to shoot him. He returned the axe and was released, but the Umpquas apparently felt insulted. On Sunday, the following day, the expedition encamped on the north bank of the Umpqua, today called Smith's River, just off the western tip of today's Perkins Island.

Early the next morning Jedediah, accompanied by Big John Turner and Richard Leland (a British sailor who had joined the party in California) set out by canoe to examine the nearby country and work out a route for the day's travel. Rogers was instructed not to let any Indians into camp to trade—Jedediah was suspicious of the Umpquas after the incident of the stolen axe.

For some reason which can never be explained, Rogers did permit about a hundred Indians to come into camp, where the men were preparing breakfast. The visitors capered about, seemingly in a good mood. One chief jumped on a horse belonging to Arthur Black and began riding around; Black ordered him down and pointed a gun at him. Two Indians grabbed Black's gun and began wrestling with him for it, and instantly the whole camp was in an uproar. The Indians, shouting their bloodcurdling war cries, fell upon the whites with knives and clubs. Within seconds all of the Americans except Black were dead. He felled several Indians with his clubbed gun, then ran into the safety of the woods. The Umpquas, preoccupied with murder and plunder, did not follow him.

When Smith and his two companions returned an hour later, they could tell, from some distance away, that things were not right at the camp. There were no fires; there was an unearthly stillness. Then an Indian fired on them from the riverbank, and Old Smith knew what must have happened. Instantly the canoe was turned about and the three men paddled for their lives toward the ocean. Abandoning the canoe, they struck out north in the direction of the Hudson's Bay Company's post on the Columbia, Fort Vancouver. Black, too, was headed for the fort; he arrived there, almost naked and nearly starved, on August 8, a few hours before Smith, Turner, and Leland, in the same condition, made their appearance.

THE once-proud South West Expedition of the firm of Smith, Jackson and Sublette was reduced now to four exhausted scarecrows. All was lost—men, furs, horses, supplies, guns, ammunition. And to cap the catastrophe, the survivors had no choice but to throw themselves on the mercy of the principal opposition to American presence west of the Rockies, the mighty Hudson's Bay Company.

However, the chief factor at Fort Vancouver, Dr. John McLoughlin, turned out to be the soul of kindness. A Hudson's Bay Company brigade was immediately dispatched to the Umpqua to reclaim the plundered horses, furs, and supplies from the Indians. Some but not all were found and brought back to the fort, where the Hudson's Bay Company purchased the horses and furs in spite of the fact that the latter were in poor condition due to exposure to the rain while in the hands of the Indians. The brigade also buried the mutilated bodies of the massacred men.

Jedediah, Arthur Black, and Richard Leland stayed at Fort Vancouver until the following March. Big John Turner entered the employ of "the Honourable Company," as Hudson's Bay men respectfully referred to it, and guided a brigade south to California. He stayed on in California and Oregon, and was a member of the so-called "Second Relief" which went to the assistance of the tragic Donner Party in 1846.

During the winter at the fort Old Smith was able to savor again the atmosphere of the civilization he had left six years before. Fort Vancouver was an oasis in a wilderness which stretched for hundreds of miles on all sides of it. Most of Dr. McLoughlin's fellow officers were educated men, some of them graduates of Oxford and Edinburgh, most of them of Scottish birth—intelligent, canny, strong-willed. The fort had a library in which were volumes on history, agriculture, the classics, travel, and poetry. The London *Times* was on the library table. There were morning prayers and Sunday worship, with the "Big Doctor" reading the service from the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. The evening meal was a formal feast with a giant of a kilted Highlander piping the officers and guests into the dining hall, where the long table was set with fine china, silver, and linen. A typical evening meal was roast pork, boiled mutton, baked salmon, ham, beets, carrots, turnips, cabbage, potatoes and bread, topped by French and Italian wines and cigars.

Jedediah repaid all this unexpected hospitality by drawing maps to guide future Hudson's Bay Company brigades on hunts south through Oregon into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley—ignoring, as did his hosts, the fact that all the land south of the 42nd parallel belonged to Mexico. He also estimated its fur resources and passed on the knowledge he had acquired of the various Indian tribes of California. All this, of course, was of great value to "the Honourable Company."

EARLY in March word reached Fort Vancouver that two parties of Americans were trapping in the vicinity of the Hudson's Bay Company's Flathead Post, in what is now western Montana. Jedediah knew that at least one of them had to be a Smith, Jackson and Sublette brigade. He decided to leave Fort Vancouver forthwith and on March 12, with characteristic boldness, he and Arthur Black said goodbye to Dr. McLoughlin and set off by boat up the Columbia. Richard Leland elected to stay at the fort.

We know little about the journey back into the mountains. The only word we have as to this final leg of the travels of the South West Expedition (now reduced to two men) is to be found in the firm of Smith, Jackson and Sublette's "A brief sketch of accidents, misfortunes, and depredations," submitted to General William Clark on December 24, 1829:

"Mr. Smith remained there [Fort Vancouver] until the 12th March, when he ascended the Columbus [Columbia], and passing several trading posts until he came to Kettle Falls Fort Caldwell [Colville]; from there on he proceeded on passing the Flathead trading post on the Flathead River, until he joined one of his partners [Davy Jackson] in the Colonais [Kootenai] country; from there he proceeded and joined Mr. W. L. Sublette, on the 5th of August, 1829, at the Tetons on Henry's Fork S. branch Columbia."

Thus tersely is summed up a water and wilderness *jornada* of hundreds of miles through some of the most rugged and magnificent country on the North American continent, a trek which brought two young Americans bearing the modest names of Smith and Black from the watershed of the Columbia across the main range of the Rockies and down to Missouri waters which drained half a continent into the Gulf of Mexico.

In view of the great loss of men and of money, the South West Expedition of 1826-29 must be accounted a catastrophe. No new beaver streams had been discovered except in the central valley of California, and these could not be successfully trapped as long as Mexico controlled the country and its ports. No Buenaventura River had been found, unless the Sacramento could be said to play the role. Financially, the firm of Smith, Jackson and Sublette had profited not at all, the small amount received by Jedediah for his furs and horses at Fort Vancouver having sufficed only to pay for desperately needed supplies.

On August 4, after the summer rendezvous in Pierre's Hole in the Tetons, Jedediah and his partners left the mountains for St. Louis, arriving there in mid-October. It would be pleasant to report an end to the ordeals of Old Smith, but it was not to be. He bought a house in St. Louis and tried, to no avail, to settle down. He had become a wilderness lover. He decided to go into the Santa Fe trade, and Sublette and Jackson went with him. On April 10, 1831, they left St. Louis for New Mexico with eighty-three men and twenty-four wagons.

Once again Jedediah's party was assailed by hunger, thirst, and savage hostility. On May 27, 1831, while searching for water in the dry bed of the Cimarron River, Old Smith was surprised and killed by Comanches.

Thus, at the advanced age of thirty-two, died one of the West's greatest explorers and cartographers. No one had made a greater contribution to the opening of the country between the Rockies and the Pacific Coast. In the words of his eulogist, writing in the *Illinois Magazine* for June, 1832, "though he fell under the spears of the savages, and his body has glutted the prairie wolf, and none can tell where his bones are bleaching, he must not be forgotten."

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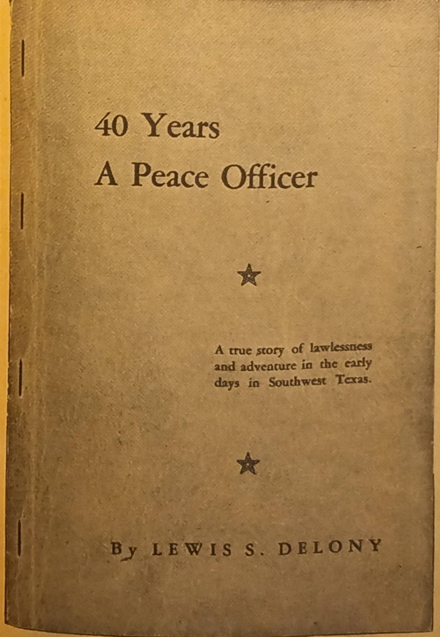

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A Peace Officer

A true story of lawlessness and adventure in the early days in Southwest Texas.

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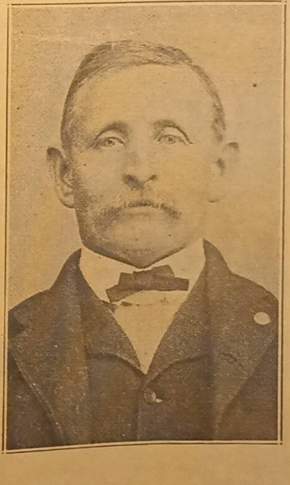

Lewis Delony's book, which bears no place or date of publication, is dedicated "to my very best friend Louis Montgomery of Abilene, Taylor County, Texas." The facsimile above is exactly half the size of the actual book. Delony's photo from the book was taken when he was Chief of Austin Detective Bureau in Austin, Texas.

Privately Printed
by the Author

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CHAPTER I
The Early Delonys

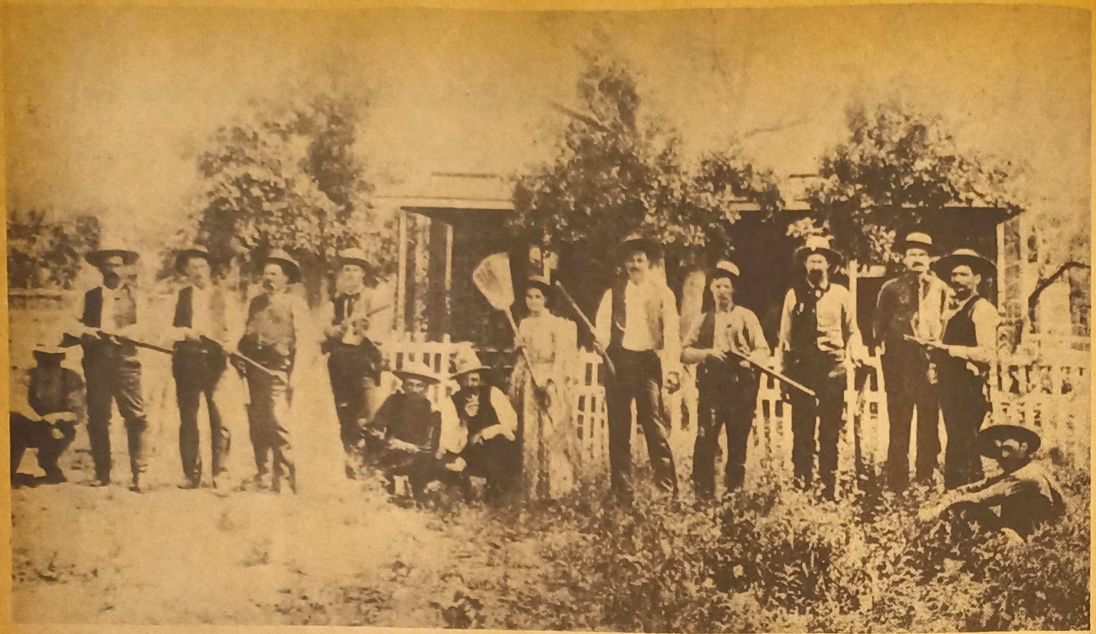
My grandfather, Lewis Henry Delony, served as an officer with Napoleon Bonaparte in all of his wars. My grandfather marched across the Alps and was in the battle of Moscow. The city was burned the night after the French army marched in, and they had to march back across the mountains in the snow. It was on this march that Napoleon lost the flower of his army.

My grandfather fought at the battle of Waterloo. When Napoleon was about to surrender, my grandfather was with his bodyguard and only about 500 men were left able to fight. They asked permission and received it from Napoleon, to cut their way out through the German lines. With their sabres they charged the German army four lines deep and cut their way through. Among the few that succeeded in making their escape was my grandfather, Lewis H. Delony. He came to the United States. Afterward he sent for his wife and mother, my grandmother and my great-grandmother.

They bought a plantation on the Tom Bigby river, in Sumpter county, Ala.

My father, Lewis Henry Delony, was born in Sumpter County, Alabama on September 24, 1824, where he lived with his mother. His father died when he was about nine years old, and his grandmother died about the same time. When he was seventeen years old his mother died.

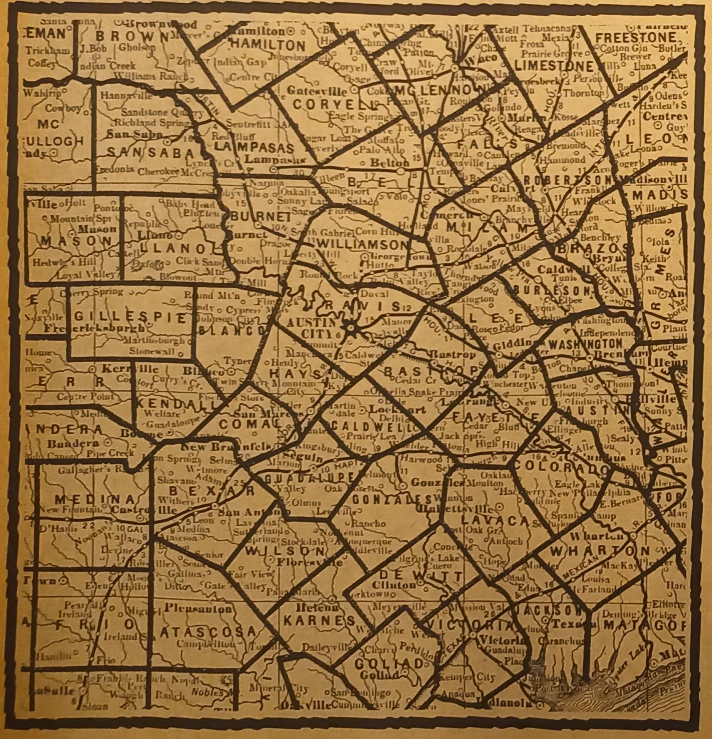
When my father was about eighteen years old, he joined a company of volunteers to fight the Mexicans. They landed at Galveston, Texas, and shipped their horses and accoutrements to Richmond. From Richmond, they rode horses back to San Antonio. They arrived too late to



Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Texas Rangers on duty at Thurber, Texas in Erath County in 1889. Members of Capt. Sam McMurry's Company B above are (from left) J. W. Bracken, Arthur Terrell, Tom Mahorn, Tom Platt, Sam Platt, Sterling Price, Tom Hickman, Mrs. Sam Platt, W. J. L. Sullivan, Ed Britton, Lon Lewis, Rudd Platt, and Phil Best. Below, some of the Texas country Delony patrolled. DeWitt County is at lower center.

Map from People's Family Atlas of the World, Chicago, 1884, Courtesy John Wallace

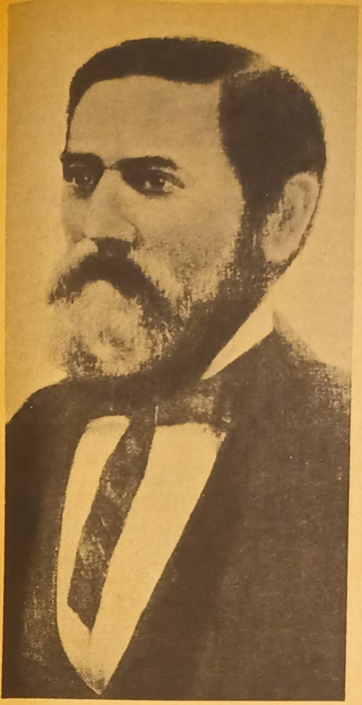


get into the first army of invasion which was at that time in camp at Brownsville. The Indians were on the warpath and had gone into camp above San Antonio about where Kerrville now is.

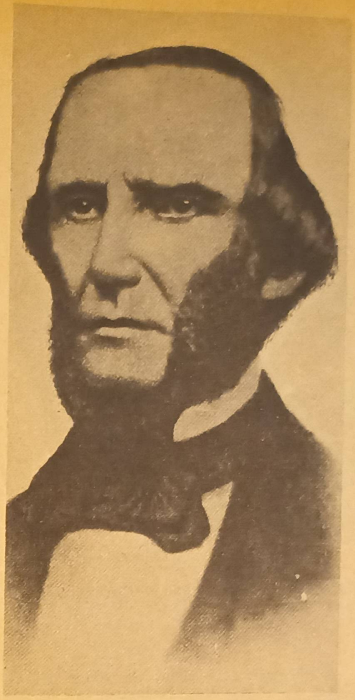
My father joined Jack Hays' Texas Rangers and left San Antonio at once to fight the Indians. They attacked the Indian camp one morning about daylight. It was a hard fight. Several of the Americans were killed and several more wounded. My father's mess mate, a young man named Laneston from Alabama, was killed. After scouting and chasing the Indians for several months, my father returned to San Antonio where Jack Hays was raising a company to join the United States army to enter Mexico.

My father enlisted and afterward fought in every battle in that war. After the battle of Monterrey, Mexico, he was transferred to General Scott's army at Vera Cruz and marched to the City of Mexico, fighting all of the way. It took them some time to take the city. They fought from street corner to street corner, from citadel to citadel, taking one at a time.

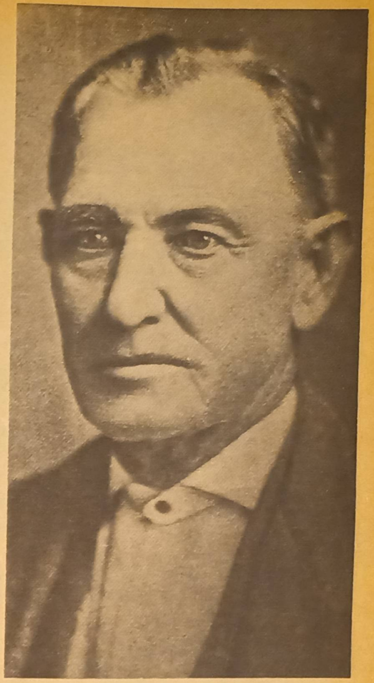
My father was stationed for two years in the City of Mexico after the war. The Indians would come down from the mountains every few weeks and capture a town and carry off the women, cattle and horses. The soldiers would follow them into the mountains and attack and rout them, recapture the women and stock and return them to their homes. My father said in one of the fights, every officer and man was either killed or wounded except himself. The company was composed of 105 men. I told him he must have been behind a big rock. He said no; he was standing beside his captain and when the captain's right arm was shot and broken, he said he took off his shirt and bound up the arm. Men were falling all around him. He expected at any moment to be killed. But he was never wounded, although he fought through three wars. He was a Confederate vet, as well as a Mexican vet, and an Indian fighter.



Captain Jack Hays



General Ben McCulloch



General Henry McCulloch

Photos Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

He was a member of Emmitt Lynch Camp, Cuero, Texas, when he died September 25, 1902 in his 79th year at Cuero, DeWitt County, Texas.

My father surveyed and helped to establish the county lines of DeWitt County and served for several years as county assessor of taxes. The first assessor of taxes for DeWitt County was killed by Indians, and my father was appointed by the county commissioners. Jonathan York and Jacob Miller, two of the wealthiest men in the county, signed his bond of a thousand dollars on the 24th day of August 1851. I now have his old bond in my possession. My grandfather on my mother's side of the house, James N. Smith, signed the bond as well as my father.

My father was a Mason and belonged to Live Oak Lodge, Cuero, Texas. He was an elder in the Southern Presbyterian Church for many years and was beloved by all members of his church, and a great many others who were not members. My father married Mrs. Sarah Ann Murphree, the widow of John Murphree on November 20, 1856. She was the daughter of James N. Smith of DeWitt County, Texas. My grandfather, James N. Smith was born on the 14th of September, 1789, in Richmond County, North Carolina, near the great Pee Dee River. In 1840, he moved to Texas and settled on Cuero Creek in Gonzales county.

CHAPTER II

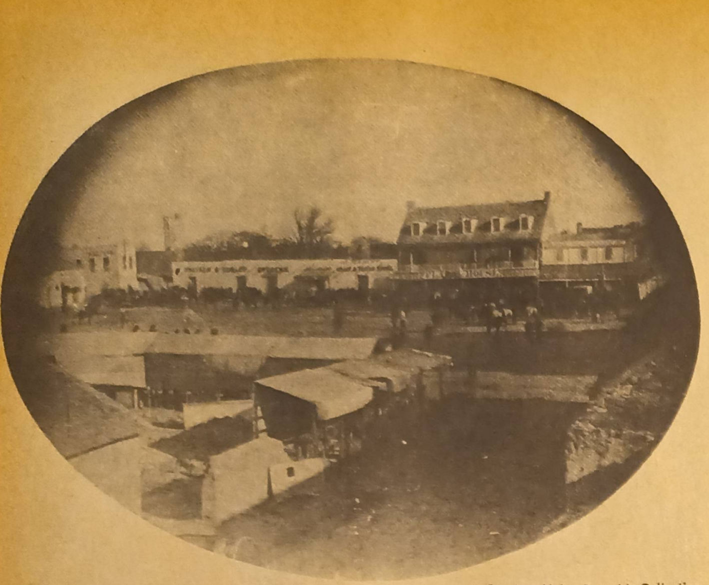
A short time after my grandfather, James N. Smith, affectionately known as "Uncle Jimmy" Smith, settled in Gonzales County, Texas in 1840 a large body of Comanche Indians came down to the bay at Linnville, Texas.

I now quote from an account written by my grandfather, James N. Smith, in his book printed in 1874, of the Battle of Plum Creek in Gonzales County, Texas. He says, "General Ben McCullough [McCulloch] and his brother, Henry McCullough [McCulloch] lived near the town of Gonzales. The General was a great Indian fighter. And he often went up the river Guadalupe and creeks to hunt for Indian trails. General McCullough came to Cuero settlement and told Capt. Tumlinson about the Indians being below on the river. He went on the trail while Capt. Tumlinson and Capt. Friar raised all the men in our neighborhood (except three or four to guard the women and children), who were brought to my house.

"The Indians got to the town of Victoria, Texas, and had a fight, killing three men and took a woman and child prisoner, (Mrs. Crosby). They afterward went to Linnville on Matagorda Bay. The citizens saw the Indians and took to the little boats and went out into deep water. The Indians then packed up all the goods and burnt every house in the place. They also had with them a large drove of horses which they had stolen.

"Capt. Tumlinson and I went with his men to Victoria and we came upon the Indians on the Garcitas Creek, where we fought a battle and killed about twenty Indians, we losing only one man. We then retreated about two miles and camped, leaving the Indians stiff on the battleground. The next morning General McCullough sent an express to me, (Capt. Smith) saying to proceed with great haste to Gonzales and to raise a company of men to meet the Indians on Plum Creek. After raising my company, we arrived within four miles of the Indians, where they had camped for the night.

"We waited until 11 o'clock before Col. Burleson's men arrived. We then ordered our two companies to leave our baggage at the camp. The Indians finding we were pursuing them, halted and formed into a line of battle near a point of post oak timber. We marched up in single file, the two companies being fifty yards apart. When within about 200 yards from the Indians in front of us, we halted and dismounted. The Indians in order to draw our attention from the main body would send a few Indians with their arrows and shields to ride around our lines too far from us to be shot at. In the meantime their other warriors were going into the timber unobserved by General [Felix] Huston. There were still many warriors and squaws on the prairie in front of us. While the Indians were in the timber shooting at us, General McCullough rode up to General Huston and said in the name of heaven order a charge through the timber. The charge was ordered and the Indians fled, killing one of the white ladies and her child and wounding another lady badly in her



Courtesy Helen Reynolds Collection

Main Plaza in San Antonio, Texas in the possession of Colonel Ben McCulloch and his Rangers on the morning of February 16, 1861.

breast. We then had a running fight for over ten miles in a valley between two high hills.

"The valley was about one-half mile wide. The Indians left all their horses and mules, together with the goods they had taken at Linnville, scattered for miles in the valley. In this running fight we killed forty Indians. We had only two men wounded, which was done before we charged the timber. The next day all the horses and goods were divided by lot among the men.

"A few months after the battle of Plum Creek, General McCullough raised 100 volunteers and joined the army of the Republic of Texas. My son James B. Smith was under General McCullough in this expedition. They were great friends and in after years had their portraits taken together, each keeping one in remembrance of their friendship."

I will now proceed with my narrative. I will refer my readers to the history of Texas for further particulars of this noted battle of Plum Creek in which my grandfather, James N. Smith, commanded a company of men.

Now I come to DeWitt County, the county in which I was born. My father, Lewis Henry Delony, my grandfather, James N. Smith and my cousin, Sam D. Calhoun, surveyed the lines of DeWitt County, cutting it off from Gonzales County. My grandfather was the first county clerk of said county and served for twenty-five years afterward.

My father was the first surveyor of DeWitt County and afterward was assessor of taxes for many years in DeWitt County.

CHAPTER III
Creation of DeWitt County

When the new Legislature met in 1846, one of the first bills passed was to create the county of DeWitt, so many square miles more or less to be cut off of Gonzales and a small amount to be cut off of Victoria and about the same off of Goliad county. But the larger part of the county was cut off of Gonzales County.

An appropriation was made to survey and establish the county lines of DeWitt county, Texas and father, Mr. Lewis H. Delony secured the contract. My grandfather, James N. Smith, (on my mother's side) was also a surveyor, and he assisted my father in surveying the lines. Sam D. Calhoun, a boy at that time about fifteen or sixteen years old, carried the chain. My grandfather, James N. Smith, owned a negro man about twenty years old by the name of Dick, who led the pack horse and other horses and did the cooking and other necessary work, cutting brush out of the way, etc. Sometimes Cousin Sam Calhoun would get tired, and the negro would take his place, and he would lead the horses.

My father said he did not find any trouble in locating the Victoria and Goliad County lines. But when he ran the Lavaca County line he found it not correct. He surveyed three different lines before getting it correct. He then figured the number of square acres he had cut off of Goliad and Victoria Counties, and then ran the Lavaca County into or through Gonzales County far enough to make the required amount of square acres called for in the bill or contract.

He then drew a map of DeWitt County, showing the Guadalupe river and its winding through the county. He also showed all of the creeks in the county. The state accepted his map and paid him for his work.

My father said DeWitt County was one of the best watered if not the best county in the state. There is at least fifteen creeks in the county, besides the Guadalupe River.

The First Court House

In the spring of 1848 a group of men formed a company or a syndicate and employed my father, Lewis H. Delony to survey and plan the townsite of Clinton, DeWitt County, Texas, about a half-mile south of the Guadalupe River. In the summer of 1848, a committee of men called on the commissioners court that convened at Capt. Friar's store near Cameron in DeWitt County. All courts met at Capt. Friar's store as there was no courthouse at this time in the county.

This committee made a proposition to the court. They offered to give a lot in the town of Clinton and to build a courthouse on it, according to the specifications then on file in the county clerk's office at Cameron. (My grandfather was county clerk at that time. He built his office at his own expense. I don't think the county ever did pay him for it.) They offered to build the courthouse for so much money and to take county scrip or bonds for the payment of the courthouse. I think they ran for five or ten years at ten percent interest. I am not sure just how long they ran, as I am writing from memory what my father told me, although I have read the records also while a deputy sheriff of DeWitt County in 1876 at Clinton.

The county court accepted the proposition made by the committee and the courthouse was built in Clinton that fall, 1848, by negro slaves owned by the syndicate of men. At that time very few white men did any manual labor in Texas.

I will now describe the courthouse, as I saw it and knew it between 1865 and 1870. While a boy I played in the old log cabin nearly every Saturday. The courthouse was eighteen feet long and sixteen feet wide, built of logs hewed smooth on both sides and notched at the ends, so as to fit close together on edges. The walls were about eight feet high, there was one door made of boards and hung on wooden hinges, and there was one window made of boards hung on wooden hinges. On the outside, a wooden button was used to fasten the door and window on the outside. The cracks in the walls between the logs were plastered with mud and grass mixed together. The rafters looked like six-inch saplings hewed smooth on both sides and they were pinned together with wooden pins at top and bottom. Strips of small saplings hewed smooth were nailed on the rafters with rough nails. The roof was covered with clapboards about three feet long fastened down with nails. The gables were covered with clapboards also. There was no shelves inside of the courthouse when I saw it in 1865. The last time I saw the old log cabin was in 1931. Hogs were sleeping in it. The window was gone and part of the roof was gone.

Lewis H. Delony Bond

State of Texas,
County of DeWitt.

Know all men by these presents that I, Lewis H. Delony as Principal and we, Jonathan York, Jacob A. Miller and Buckner Harris as securities are firmly bound unto the Chief Justice of the County of DeWitt or any of his successors in office in the full sum of One Thousand Dollars to the payment whereof well and truly to be made we firmly bind ourselves, our heirs, Executors, Administrators and Assigns jointly and severally by these presents in the faith of which we hereunto set our hands and seals this 26th day of August, A. D. 1851. The condition of the above obligation is such that whereas the above bounded Lewis H. Delony hath been appointed Assessor and Collector for the County of DeWitt and State aforesaid on the 18th day of August A.D. 1851 by the Hon. County Court for said County and State in place of Charles A. Tuton, Deceased.

Now if the said Lewis H. Delony shall well and truly perform all the duties of said office as by Law required, fully and justly assessing and collecting the taxes which are and may be due the County and paying over and accounting for the same to the proper authorities and honestly doing and performing all things which Law or duty requires of him as the Holder of said office then this obligation becomes null and void otherwise to Remain in full force and effect.

Signed and sealed the day and date above written.

Lewis H. Delony
Jonathan York
Jacob A. Miller
B. Harris

State of Texas,
County of DeWitt.

I, James M. Baker, Chief Justice for said County do hereby certify that I have examined and approved the within Bond and that the oath required by Law, hath been administered and that the said Bond with the Endorsements thereon are ready to be recorded in the County Clerk's office of DeWitt County.

Given under my hand and seal of the County Court this 26th day of August, A. D. 1851.

(Seal) J. M. Baker, Chief
Justice of DeWitt County.

CHAPTER IV

I was born on the 21st day of October 1857, at Clinton, the county seat of DeWitt County, Texas, three miles across the Guadalupe river from Cuero, the present county seat.

About as far back as I can remember are the days of the Civil War.

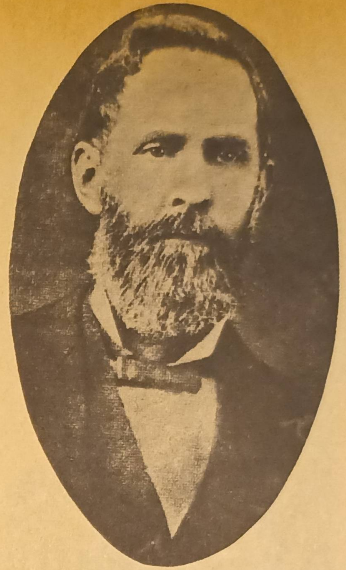
I remember one day my father and several of his neighbors started off with a big bunch of negroes. I heard my mother ask my father where they were going with all those negroes. He said they were going down the other side of Victoria to take up the railway leading to Indianola on the coast to keep the Yankees from getting into Texas.

Then I can remember after the surrender of General Lee, before my father returned from the war, there was a regiment of negro soldiers camped on the river about three miles from my father's farm. We lived at that time on Deer Creek, about five miles from Clinton.

The soldiers came to our house and robbed our smokehouse and stole all our chickens and turkeys. One day I had a pet pig in the yard, and several negro Yanks came and killed it and carried it off.

Another time my mother was making some soap, a large wash pot full. She cut it up in small pieces and had the soap on a platform drying out. She expected to sell it to the white officers when they came by the house. That day four negro soldiers came and ordered my mother to get them dinner at once. My mother was very much frightened and she told old Uncle Dick, our negro foreman to run down on the creek and see if he could find an officer. While Uncle Dick was gone, three negro Yanks got some sacks and were putting the soap in them.

My mother begged them not to take the soap as that was all she could sell to get a little money. They cussed my mother and told her to hurry up that dinner. About that time two white officers came running up on their horses and asked those soldiers what were they doing there. They started to tell some kind of a story, when I ran out of the house and told the officers what they said to my mother and that they were stealing all her soap. They then called my mother out of the house and asked her how much the soap was worth. She said she asked $5 for it. One of the officers gave her a five-dollar gold piece and ordered the soldiers away with the soap. That was the first gold piece I ever saw in my life.



Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Henry Clay Pleasants (or Plesants), district court judge for forty years in DeWitt County, Texas and a lifelong friend of the author.

I remember very well when my father returned from the war. I saw a bunch of men with a wagon on the road in front of our house. They looked to me like a bunch of wild men. They were bare-headed and bare-footed, and their clothes were in rags. My mother had been standing on the gallery every day looking for father. This morning she happened to be in the house sewing when I ran in and called her to come and look at the wild men. My father was walking and leading old Money, his war horse, and a one-legged Confederate soldier was riding him. Before my mother and I could get to them, they helped the man off and placed him in a wagon. Then my mother put her arms around my father and cried for joy. The wagon moved on with several wounded men in it. My father was bare-footed and his clothes in rags.

Not long after my father came home from the war, a bunch of negro soldiers rode up to the home and seeing my mother in the yard called out to her and demanded that she cook them dinner at once, and began abusing her like they had done several times before. My father was in the house (the Yankees did not know he was at home). He came to the door with his old Enfield rifle he had brought back from the war. The soldiers had gotten off of their horses and started into the yard. My father pointed his gun at them and called to them to halt; they turned and ran over one another trying to get out of the gate. Some of them jumped over the fence, mounted their horses and ran away.

That same evening an officer and four negro privates came and arrested my father and took him to their camp. He was tried by a court martial for drawing a gun on a U. S. soldier. Fortunately for my father, the two officers who paid my mother for her soap took up for him and corroborated my father's statements in regard to how my mother had been treated by the private soldiers. They turned him loose but wanted to know why he was wearing the Confederate uniform. He told them that it was all the clothes he had. They ordered the buttons cut off, which was done. And my father came home that night.

Another time my father and I were riding to the town of Clinton from the farm, and just as we crossed Chisholm Creek near Clinton, a soldier ran up behind us out of the creek and threw his gun down on my father and arrested him for another man by the name of Gib Gay. My father told him that he knew Mr. Gay very well, but his name was Delony, not Gay. But the soldier said we must go to headquarters at camp. We then turned back with him and went to the camp. As soon as my father spoke to the commanding officer, the officer knew him and at once ordered my father released. It was then so late we did not go to town but went back home.

Shortly after this, my father moved to the town of Clinton, the county seat at that time. I went to school to Mr. Cocke, a son-in-law of Judge [Henry] Clay Pleasants, the district judge. After that I went to school to Major Carruth, one of the bravest men and one of the best teachers in the state. There was a young man about nineteen years old going to school by the name of Jake Ryan. He was a very bad boy and disobeyed the rules of the school. Finally Major Carruth could stand him no longer. So he gave him a good whipping. Jake fought like a wild cat but the teacher won out. The next morning Jake Ryan did not show up at school. About 11 o'clock that day five men rode up to the school house. It happened to be recess time and we boys was all out in the front playing. They called to Mr. Carruth to come out to them. He walked a few feet toward them and stopped and inquired what they wanted. (Two of the men were half brothers of Jake Ryan.)

They told him that he whipped Jake, and that they were going to hang him for it. One of them got down his rope and started to ride to Major Carruth. The Major told him to halt, if he came any further toward him he would kill him. The man stopped. Major Carruth said, "I want to explain why I had to correct Jake." He then told them what kind of talk and swearing Jake used toward him in the school before all the girls and boys.

In the meantime we boys gathered around our teacher and were going to protect him the best we could. I was about twelve years old at that time. I had a pocket derringer. It shot once at a time. Some of the other boys had pistols, and some of them were sixteen or eighteen years old. About this time several men came running up the street with guns in their hands. When these men saw them, they rode away.

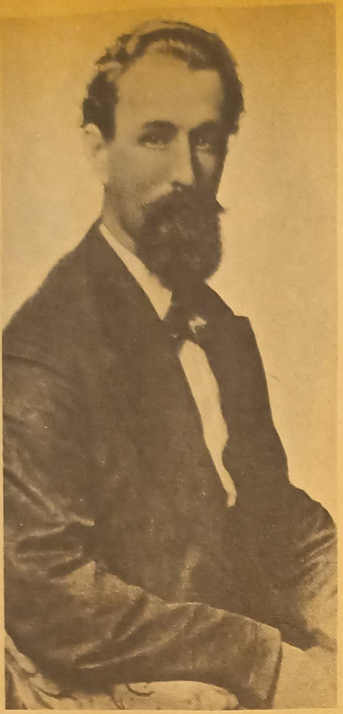
I never saw a cooler and braver man in my life than Major Carruth. He was a Christian gentleman and an elder in the Presbyterian church. I believe we would have had a bloody fight if those men had not come when they did. Among those who came to help the Major was Captain Friend and Judge S. F. Grimes. I do not remember the names of the others. Some time after this, we had school closing exercises in the courthouse. As well as I can remember it was in June 1869.

That night Tobe Kelley was going to stay all night with me. So after my grandfather Smith and my father and mother and family had gone to the courthouse, Tobe Kelley and myself stayed behind to turn out the calves from the milk cows. As soon as we got through, we hurried to get to the courthouse. The courthouse was built in a big square of ground and was fenced in with a plank fence on all four sides of this square. There were steps (or stiles) to go over the fence. These steps were open at the ends so a person could crawl under them. When we came down the street, we heard some loud talking, and as we passed the first saloon we saw a crowd of armed men in there. We hurried to get to the steps, when a man ran out of a saloon just ahead of us and shot at someone coming out of the saloon back of us. We ran under the steps at the square and waited until the battle was over. Dick Chisholm, a young man about twenty years old who lived just across the street from our house was shot down and killed, within ten feet of us. I heard him say, "My God I am killed." Another man was killed close to us by the name of Buck Taylor. As soon as the shooting was over, we ran to the courthouse and up the stairs. Just as we got to the head of the stairs, someone asked me who was shot and I said Dick Chisholm is killed. I heard a scream and saw Mrs. Chisholm, his mother, fall in a faint. This feud was known as the Sutton and Taylor feud and lasted for several years. I will write more about this feud later.

In 1868, I made my first trip to San Antonio. My father and my cousins, Sam D. and John R. Calhoun, ran a wagon-train from Old Indianola or Powder Horn, a town on the bay, to San Antonio. After unloading the freight, we would load our wagons with cotton and hides for Indianola. I was only in my twelfth year when I drove a wagon with four horses on this trip to San Antonio. I curried the horses and harnessed them to the wagon every morning by myself.

One morning while camped on the Bay Prairie, I was up before daylight cooking breakfast, while my father and cousins were away hunting the horses. We hobbled most of the horses and put a bell on some so we could find them. The wolves were very thick at that time on the prairie and seemed to be very hungry. They were howling and gathering in great droves around our camp. I could see them with their eyes shining by the light of the fire. They smelled the bacon I was cooking. I knew they were afraid of fire, so when some of them came too close, I would throw a blazing piece of wood at them. I kept this up until I had thrown all of my fire away. I called very loudly for help, but none came.

The wolves came all around the wagon. I grabbed an axe and crawled up on the wagon. There was a side of bacon in the front end of the wagon, and the wolves was jumping up on the wagon wheels trying to get it. I finally struck one with the axe and it fell back among the bunch and the others ate him up and fought one another for several minutes. It was then getting daylight, and they began to leave. About that time the men came up with the horses and seeing some of the wolves, shot at them and ran them off.



Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Capt. Lee McNelly, Texas Ranger.

Not long after the killing of Buck Taylor and Dick Chisholm, I was out one morning about sunup hunting the calves so we could milk the cows when I came upon a dead negro girl about sixteen years old. She had been shot through her heart. I ran home and reported it to my father. He and several others went to view the body, an inquest was held over the body, but the grand jury failed to indict anyone, although several young men were suspected at that time in the town of Clinton.

My mother died in January 1870 at Clinton. I was then thirteen years old. My father broke up house-keeping and rented our residence in Clinton to Judge Clay Pleasants. He lived seven years in our house at Clinton. My father taught school in DeWitt County in the 1890s and I went to school to him. At that time my half-sister, Annie E. Murphree, was teaching school at Victoria. She took my youngest brother, John M. Delony to live with her. My sister, Betty Delony was sent to Bloomington, Illinois to school and lived with one of my aunts, Mrs. Robert E. Williams, whose husband was a lawyer and a partner with A. E. Stevenson, who was elected vice-president as running mate with President Cleveland in 1892. My other brother, William W. Delony stayed with my father and me.

In 1871 my father taught school in Gonzales County, and we boarded with a man by the name of Putnam. There were quite a lot of grown young men and ladies going to school to my father. As he taught a pay school, I never went to a free school in my life.

There was a very bad young man about twenty years old going to school, and he disobeyed my father and the rules of school. One day my father tried to correct him by talking to him, but it did no good, so my father told him that he would have to quit school or behave himself. He then said he was not going home but would do as he d—m pleased. My father then told him he was going to whip him. He then cursed my father and told him he could not whip him, when he drew a knife and ran at my father. My father then knocked him down, took the knife away from him and gave him a good whipping with a leather strap. The next morning early before breakfast, the father of this young man came riding up to the front gate and called my father out of the house to the gate. My father started out to the gate, and this man pointed his rifle at my father and demanded of my father why he had whipped his son? (His son was a larger man than my father.)

Just at this moment I came around the house with my shotgun. I had been down on the creek killing squirrels. When I saw him with his gun on my father, I cocked both barrels of my gun and told him to drop that gun or I would kill him. The man took his gun down and laid it across in front of his saddle. My father did not know I was about. When he saw me with the gun, he ordered me to go into the house. I did so but had my gun down on the man all the time.

By this time Mr. Putman and several of his sons came out of the house and ordered the man to leave. In the meantime my father explained to him why he had to correct his son. The man went away very mad. He had eight children going to school at $3 each per month. None of them came back for about two weeks; after that all of them came back to school except the young man that my father whipped. He told it all around the neighborhood that he was going to kill my father. But shortly after this the grand jury met in Gonzales and he ran off. Ten years after this I arrested this same man and placed him in jail at Clinton for stealing horses.

In the fall of 1871 my father took me and my brother, William, in a two-horse wagon to Arkansas. He intended to place us both in school at Jefferson, Arkansas, where my uncle, Alcaney Delony was president of a large school. We stayed at my uncle's for about two weeks, then we drove in the wagon into Louisiana and stopped at Tulip, Louisiana, where my father's sister lived. Her name was Beard. We spent Christmas at her house. Then we went on into Beeuville [Bienville] Parish, where another brother of my father lived, Mr. M. Delony. He was a Presbyterian preacher and lived near Homer. While I was in Louisiana, Uncle M. Delony was elected to the legislature on the Democratic ticket. My father changed his mind about sending me to school in Arkansas; as a cousin of mine, Willis Delony was going to Baton Rouge to a military school, I went with him. I stayed at school until July and came with my cousin to his home to spend vacation. In the meantime my father had gone broke in the sheep business in Texas. So I had to go to work. I took a contract to clear up 100 acres of new ground from my uncle, M. Delony in north Louisiana. He agreed to give me ten dollars per acre.

I went down to Trenton, a town on the Mississippi River, in a wagon and bought axes, grubbing hoes, supplies etc., and while there I hired some Irishmen and Swedes and brought them back with me. I went into a camp out in the woods and worked all summer, fall and winter. In the spring I finished and made enough money clearing new ground and splitting rails to go back to school. I stayed at school until the fall of 1875. Then I came back to Clinton, Texas, the town in which I was born.

I forgot to state when I saw my first railroad train. It was at Navasota, Texas, in the fall of 1871, when we were traveling in a wagon to Arkansas. I was walking ahead of the wagon looking for a squirrel to kill for dinner, when I heard a great rumbling noise. I did not know what it was. I ran back to the wagon and called to my father to know if he knew what it was. He said it was a railroad train, so whipped up his horses and we got to the track in time to see the train pass. I thought it was the fastest thing I ever saw. Father said it was going about twelve miles per hour.

Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Cuero, Texas on November 26, 1912 during a turkey drive through town.

CHAPTER VI

I arrived in Clinton about the last of September 1875. I accepted a position with Sam Webb, who kept a general dry goods and grocery store in Clinton. I clerked in this store and was also asst. postmaster, as Mr. Webb kept the post office in his store. It was a month after I returned home when disabilities were removed and I was made of age and was appointed deputy sheriff of DeWitt County by Captain William Weisiger, sheriff of said county. I held my commission under him as long as he stayed in office, which was for several years. I kept his books for him and also clerked in the store.

I boarded at Mr. Webb's house. During the winter of 1875 and the spring of 1876 there were several fights between the Suttons and Taylors in DeWitt County. The worst fight at that time took place in Thomaston. A man by the name of Willey Pridgen was killed and several others were wounded. It has been so long ago, that I cannot remember all of the details.

Not long after this fight at Thomaston, the Taylors came into Clinton. I saw seven armed men ride up to Judge Killgore's drug store in the block across the street from the store I clerked in. Five of them got off of their horses, the other two held the horses. They were after Mr. Add Killgore to kill him, as he was head deputy sheriff of DeWitt County and had arrested some of the gang a while before this.

A few minutes after I saw these men get off their horses at the drug store, Add Killgore came running into my store and said, "They are after me. I want you to close up the store and help me fight them."

I said, "You must hide somewhere."

He said, "What will you do?"

I said, "I will stay in the store and try to throw them off of your trail. Run into this storeroom on the back gallery and hide."

He went into the store and lay down and I covered him up with shucks and boxes. He had a six-shooter in each hand. I locked the door with a padlock and walked back into the store. Just as I walked behind the counter, two men ran in the side door and three in the front door, with Winchesters in their hands. Sam Webb and his son, Larry Webb, (about my age) had run into the house and hid and left me all alone. The men asked me if Add Killgore had come into the store. I said yes, he came through here just now. Bill Taylor then asked me which way he went. I said he went out that door, pointing to the back door. This was the truth, for he had just gone out that door. They all ran out the door and around the store and back of Mr. Webb's residence. Of course they could not find him, for I had him hid in the shuck room.

They came back into the store and began to look for him. Bill Taylor came up to me, leaned across the counter, pointed a Colt's .45 six-shooter into my face, almost touching my nose, and said, "Lewis, you are lying, he is hid in this store. And if you don't tell me where he is, I will blow your d—— head off."

I looked him straight into his eyes and said, "Bill, take that pistol down, it might go off."

He took the pistol down and said, "Lewis, I never caught you in a lie." They then went out on the back gallery and saw the store room locked.

Bill Taylor stepped into the store and asked me for the key. I handed it to him and stepped behind the door where I had a double-barrel shotgun loaded with buckshot. I pushed the door about half shut while they were unlocking the shed room door and cocked both barrels of the shotgun very easy and placed the muzzle of the gun at the crack in the door, on a line with the door they were unlocking.

I knew if they found Add he would kill one or two of the men, and I would get the others as they came out of the door. Of course they did not expect to find Add in there. Two of them went in and looked around and came out, and then they all went off. I let the hammers of my shotgun down and put it in place and stepped out from behind the door.

I thought sure I would be killed that day. But I had gone to school with Bill Taylor and he was a friend of mine (at that time) and kept the others from killing me as they threatened to do several times that day. They stayed several hours in and around a saloon next door to my store and finally left town. That night I had Add Killgore's horse tied in a certain place. About 10 o'clock Add crawled out and got to his horse and rode down to the sheriff's home about eight miles down the river. The next morning Captain Weisiger, Add Killgore and several others came into Clinton and took the trail and followed them toward Yorktown. That night they captured a man by the name of Killensworth and brought him to Clinton and placed him in jail. I will now describe the jail. It was a two-story building of logs hewn smooth on both sides. The logs were notched at the ends so the edges of the logs would fit close together. The cracks were then plastered with mud, inside and out. There was one door to the jail and away up close to the ceiling was several small openings with iron bars across them. There was a stairway on the outside leading to a door on the second story. Then in the floor of the second story there was a trap door. It raised by a chain run through a pulley fastened to the ceiling, with a heavy weight to the other end of the chain, and when you unlocked the trap door the door would raise itself. Now I will go on with my narrative. The second night after Mr. Killensworth was in jail, a mob came in the night and overpowered the jailer or guard and forced him to go up the stairs and unlock the door for them. They had several balls of rags soaked in turpentine. They lit them with a match and threw them down into the jail and ordered all of the prisoners to get away from Killensworth. They then told Killensworth to come to the middle of the jail, and they would lower a ladder to him to come out on. As soon as he came to the middle of the jail, they shot him dead.

As soon as the shooting was over, the other prisoners stamped out the fire. The door was closed and locked and then they got on their horses and rode away. They wore masks and no one ever found out who they were. As soon as they was gone Captain Bigham White came to Mr. Webb's house and reported the killing to me. We summoned every man we could find and all of us went to the jail and opened the front door. Captain Bigham White, who was the jailer, went upstairs and let down a ladder through the trap door and made the three other prisoners climb up the ladder into the second floor, then locked down the trap door and came out and locked the outside door leaving the prisoners upstairs. Someone then took charge of the body and moved it away from the jail. We stood guard all night, but the mob never came back. We were afraid they would burn the courthouse.

CHAPTER VII

District court convened at Clinton in June 1876. The town was full of armed men on both sides of the feud. Captain McAnally [Lee McNelly] with several Texas Rangers was stationed at Clinton to keep the peace. We had no killings that I remember of during this term of court. District court convened again in December 1876. The civil docket cases were tried in December and court recessed for Christmas. The criminal docket was set for the first Monday in January 1877 and Judge Clay Pleasants had requested the governor of Texas to send some rangers to help the sheriff keep peace and keep down trouble.

The rangers were expected to arrive in Clinton the first week in January 1877. Some of the Sutton party had agreed with the district attorney, S. F. Grimes, and Sheriff William Weisiger to keep down trouble, and agreed to serve as a posse under Captain Wm. Weisiger, whenever summoned to do so.

Captain Dick Hudson was deputy sheriff at Cuero, a railroad town across the river Guadalupe about three miles from Clinton. John Meadows was marshal of Cuero. The former marshal (Rube Brown) had been killed by Wes Harden [Hardin] two years before this. Wes Harden was an outlaw and he had left the state with a reward on his head offered by the State of Texas. Jim Taylor and Bill Taylor were also outlaws. The state of Texas offered a thousand dollars reward for each, (Jim Taylor's and Bill Taylor's bodies delivered in the Calhoun County jail), for the murder of Bill Sutton and Gabe Slaughter at Indianola, Texas several years before this.

On the morning of the 27th of December, 1876, Jim Taylor rode into Clinton with about forty armed men and took possession of the town, making their headquarters at John Wofford's store diagonally across the street from Sam Webb's store where I clerked. Mr. Martin King owned a blacksmith shop and a livery stable, and the Taylors all put up their horses in his stable.

Mr. King's son, Tom King, and his adopted son, Edd Davis, were both with the Taylor gang at that time.

Captain Weisiger, the sheriff, was in town that morning when the Taylors came. He went all over town from house to house and summoned each man to come to the courthouse at once to guard it, as he thought they were going to burn the courthouse. Several men gathered at the courthouse, all armed. Among them I remember Captain Wm. Friend, a lawyer; S. F. Grimes, district attorney; Judge Clay Pleasants, district judge; Sam C. Lackey, a lawyer; John Wofford and Jim Wofford, whose store the Taylors had taken possession of and confiscated all ammunition and guns. They carried a large hardware department in connection with a general dry goods and grocery store. Also Judge Killgore, a druggist; Jim Summers and Clate Summers, and myself. Several others whose names I do not remember were there.

We guarded the courthouse all day. During the day Captain Weisiger sent a negro man to Cuero for help with a note to Captain Hudson to raise a posse of men and come at once to Clinton. The Taylors were guarding the river bridge, so they captured the negro and took him across the bridge and hung him from a tree.

Captain Weisiger waited several hours for the posse and then tried to hire another negro, but none would go. Finally a brave white boy about fifteen years old by the name of Charlie Page (his father had been killed by the Taylors) agreed to carry a note to Cuero for help. He slipped out of town and rode up the river about five miles and succeeded in crossing the river, and getting to Cuero. (We had no telephones or telegraph in those days in that part of Texas.)

Captain Weisiger waited all day for help, but none came. Just before sundown, he concluded he would go down the river in the Calhoun neighborhood and try to get help. He had framed up with Mr. King to lock up Jim Taylor's horse and Mace Arnold (nee Winchester Smith) as he was called, and the King boy's horses in his stable. The main body of the Taylors had gone down the river through a field and camped about two miles away.

Captain Weisiger promised Mr. Martin King if he would lock up the horses that when his posse came he would instruct them not to fire on his sons, Tom King and Edd Davis if they would run off by themselves. This he promised to do. When Captain Weisiger got ready to leave town, he came over across the street from the courthouse to the store where I was. The mail coach had come in from Mission Valley and I had to open the mail, as I was deputy postmaster.

I expected to have the mail robbed but each one of the Taylors inquired for their mail, and Jim Taylor inquired for several of his men. I had mail for several he inquired for as well as himself. Jim Taylor was standing in front of the store reading a letter when Captain Weisiger and Clate Summers walked over to the store from the courthouse. I expected to see both of them shot down, but the Taylors did not want to kill the officers at that time it seemed.

Captain Weisiger gave me a warrant for the arrest of Jim Taylor, Mace Arnold and a man by the name of Hendricks and told me to give the warrants to the posse, if any came before he came back to Clinton. He and Clate Summers slipped through Mr. Sam Webb's residence (it joined the store) and made their getaway. About twenty minutes after Captain Weisiger left town, his posse came, composed of Dick Hudson, Curry Wallace, Bill Meadows, Kit Hunter, Buck McCrabb, John McCrabb, Frank Cox, Bill Cox, Jake Ryan, Joe Sitterle and Edd Sitterle. I don't remember of any others in the posse.

Captain Dick Hudson commanded the posse. I gave the warrants to Captain Dick Hudson. I also gave him the instructions given me by Sheriff Weisiger, to wit: He ordered that they surround the leaders of the Taylor party and hold them until he came back, and if they showed fight to not let them get away to the main body of the men camped about two miles down the river. I also told Captain Hudson about the agreement we had with Mr. Martin King about his son and adopted son, Edd Davis. I also told him that the Taylor's horses were locked up in King's stable, and that King had gone off down in the river bottom to kill some squirrels for supper. As soon as I told him this, he gave orders to Buck McCrabb, Joe McCrabb and Curry Wallace to go to the big gate to the field and to cut them, the Taylors, off from the river bottom.

During the time I was talking to him, the Taylors were running down the street toward the livery stable where their horses were. The balance of the posse, I think, dismounted and ran down the street after the Taylors.

Dick Hudson ordered me to come and go with him. I then began to close the store. I closed the front door and put up the shutters to the windows. Larry Webb finished closing up and I took my Winchester and started down the street with Dick Hudson. He was calling to his men to stop and turn into the other street to the right so as to cut off the Taylors from the lane leading toward Goliad, but they did not hear him and kept going down the street.

The Taylors ran to the livery stable and found their horses locked up. They tried to break the door down but soon quit and ran into Mr. King's house. Jim Taylor came to the front door of the house, looked up the street and saw Kit [Christopher Taylor] Hunter and Bill Cox running toward him. He then ran out through the orchard to an old log house. All five of them ran into this log house, but ran out immediately. Just as Jim Taylor ran around the house, Kit Hunter raised his Winchester.

Jim Taylor dropped down on one knee and took aim at Kit Hunter and both shot at the same time. I saw Kit Hunter stagger and his hat flew off with a bullet hole in it. I saw Jim Taylor drop his Winchester and pick it up with his left hand. Kit Hunter had broken his right arm. Jim Taylor then ran after his men. They had jumped over the fence into the field and by this time the shooting became general. Judge Pleasants, S. F. Grimes and others came out of the courthouse trying to stop the fight.

Dick Hudson ordered them to go back and guard the courthouse, and they went back into the courthouse and looked at the fight. By the time I got to the fence I saw Tom King and Edd Davis running up the fence on the inside. I called to Edd Sitterle and someone else, I don't remember who it was. We all ran up the fence and when they saw us coming they threw up their hands. We arrested them and placed them in jail, while the others were hunting for Hendricks who had hid in the weeds. Martin King's dog heard the shooting and came running through the weeds close to where Hendricks was hid. When the dog came out of the weeds, some of the posse called to Hendricks and told him to give up as they knew where he was by the dog coming out of the weeds. Hendricks called out to the posse and told them that he was too badly wounded to walk.

They went into the weeds and got him. Curry Wallace was on his horse, so he helped him on behind him. When they got to where Jim Taylor was lying Hendricks fell off the horse dead. This ended one of the hardest fought battles that ever took place in Clinton. Jim Taylor fell dead a few yards from the fence and Mace Arnold fell dead by the side of a little tree about a hundred yards from the fence. It was quite dark when the fight was over.

CHAPTER VIII

As soon as I could get my horse from a stable back of Mr. Webb's house, I rode as fast as I could down to Captain Weisiger's home. But before I got there, I met him with a posse of men riding fast to Clinton. Among them was John Powers, Buck Powers, Jim Hasson, John Petett, and several others. Captain Weisiger told me my cousin, Sam D. Calhoun, had already gone to Clinton, as his wife, Cousin Bettie Calhoun had been in Clinton that day and had not returned. She spent the day with Mrs. Abb Webb and when the Taylors came to town, she was afraid to go back home. Cousin Sam stated that as he came into the lane leading into Clinton, he met about forty men all armed, riding two by two. They never spoke; neither did he. This was supposed to be the Taylor crowd making their getaway out of the river bottom.

We arrived in Clinton about eleven o'clock that night and relieved the guard at the courthouse and jail. The next morning the town was full of armed men and we looked for another fight, but the sheriff got everything quiet with his strong posse of men. The bodies of the dead men were turned over to their relatives for burial, so all of the men left town. That evening Dick Hudson and posse went back to Cuero. And as everything was quiet and I was very sleepy, having set up all night before, I went to bed early. I was sleeping very sound when I heard a knock at my door, and heard someone call, "Lewis!"

I jumped up and grabbed my Winchester and laid down on the floor. I then asked who it was? Captain Weisiger laughed and said, "What is the matter, Lewis. Are you afraid?" I said I thought the Taylors were after me.

He said, "Dress as quick as you can and go down to the jail, and help Bigham White guard the jail." He said, "We will have the other side to fight tonight." The guard he had placed at the river bridge had just come running into town saying a mob was coming into town to attack the jail and get the two men we had put in jail the evening of the fight.

It was about midnight. I went down to the jail and found Mr. Bigham White on guard. He said the sheriff had just told him a mob was coming. And that grand old warrior, who had drawn a white bean for his life in the Mier expedition into Mexico when a prisoner and was a veteran of three wars, drew himself up straight and said, "Lewis when they take those boys out of this jail, it will be over my dead body." I told him I would stay with him and die with him.

In a short time they came to Mr. King's blacksmith shop. They broke the padlock off the door and went into the shop and got a sledge hammer, a crow bar and some other pieces of iron. While they were getting ready to come over across the street to the jail, we could hear Captain Weisiger pleading with them not to commit this outrage. They told him to go back to the courthouse, as they did not want to hurt him. They then ran over to the jail. When they got within about twenty feet of the jail, Bigham White called to them to halt. We both cocked our Winchesters, Captain White standing with his back to the jail door. I was standing at the front of the stairs that ran up outside of the jail. Captain White told them that they couldn't get the boys without first killing him. He said, "I know most of you men. I don't think you want to kill me."

They said, "We don't want to hurt you Captain, but we are going to get those boys."

Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Captain Lee Hall in 1898.

Captain White told them he would shoot the first man who tried to break the door open. They never came any closer but some of them ran around toward the stairway. I threw my Winchester down on them and told them I would shoot the first man who tried to go up that stairway. They knew me and that I would do just what I said I would because most of them had gone to school with me to Major Carruth about five or six years before this at Clinton. They milled around the jail about an hour. The sheriff and Add Killgore came to help us hold the jail. The mob went away. We all guarded the jail the balance of the night but nothing more happened.

In a few days Captain McAnally [Lee McNelly] and Captain Lee Hall came with two companies of Texas rangers and stayed during the term of district court. Captain McAnally said he could get me a commission as special ranger if Captain Weisiger would recommend me. So in January 1877, I received my commission as special ranger. Or in other words I was a plain-clothes man for the State of Texas, or state detective. I received my orders mostly through Captain McAnally, but I still retained my commission and pay as deputy sheriff of DeWitt County and clerked in Sam Webb's store all that year. When the grand jury convened in January 1877, it found a true bill against the sheriff's posse that killed Jim Taylor, Mace Arnold and Mr. Hendricks at Clinton on the 27th of December, 1876. I was before the grand jury and stated to them all about Sheriff Weisiger's orders left with me to be given to the posse. These orders I had given to Captain Dick Hudson. The grand jury exonerated me and found no bill against me. Why the grand jury found a bill of first degree murder against any of the posse, I never could understand. The State of Texas made Jim Taylor an outlaw and offered one thousand dollars reward for his body, dead or alive in the Calhoun County jail. (At that time the DeWitt County jail was also the Calhoun County jail.)

CHAPTER IX

I received a letter from Governor R. B. Hubbard ordering me to attend the trial of these men at Clinton and help the sheriff and rangers to keep the peace. If I remember right the case was tried during the June term of court, 1877. When the trial came off, I was a witness for the defense and testified in the case. Sam C. Lackey Sr. and Judge Rudolph Kleberg both told me that my evidence alone would clear the men. They all came clear of the charge of murder.

While this trial was going on I stood at the front of the stairs and searched everyone who came and went upstairs. I was ordered to do this by Judge Clay Pleasants. There was a long table about three feet wide in the hall. The first day of the trial I had this table covered with pistols and some Winchesters. Some men would refuse to give up their arms and go off. Later they would come back and submit to be disarmed. After the first day, we seldom found a pistol on anyone as they preferred to leave them at the hotel or saloons.

After I became a special ranger. I was frequently sworn in as a riding bailiff for the grand jury because I could go into any of the adjoining counties and get witnesses. In those days everytime the grand jury convened, about one fourth of the population would leave DeWitt County. It tried men's souls to be officers in those days, more especially a bailiff for the grand jury. There were plenty of men who would fight before they would go before the grand jury.

I remember one instance when I went after a young man near Yoakum in DeWitt County, wanted before the grand jury. He ran off into Lavaca County and was picking cotton. None of his friends would tell me where he was. I went to a negro man living up there and told him if he didn't tell me where Mr. ------ was, I would take him before the grand jury and make him tell where Mr. ------ was. He then told me that Mr. ------ was picking cotton about ten miles over in Lavaca County.

When I rode into the field where he was, there was about twenty hands picking cotton. One of them pointed him out to me. He did not see me until I was close to him, and he spoke to me and asked me what I was doing there. I told him that I had come to take him before the grand jury of DeWitt County. He said he would not go, as he was in Lavaca County and I had no right to go out of DeWitt County to summon anyone. By this time I was off my horse and pointed my pistol at him and told him he was under arrest. I told a man near him to take his pistol away from him, as I was a special Texas Ranger. I told him to go get his horse. We went to the house and the man he was working for had a negro go get his horse out of the pasture.

While we were waiting he demanded to see the attachment and my commission as a ranger. He then cussed me and said if he had seen me first, I would never have arrested him, and used some more abusive language. I then put the bracelets on him and made him get on his horse. I led his horse by the bridle reins with a rope tied to his horse's neck and wrapped around my saddlehorn. Before we got to the county line, he requested me to let him hold the bridle reins for his horse stumbled so bad. But I was afraid to let him hold them, for I believe he would have run away from me. (I did not take his pocketknife from him, and he might have cut the rope, and I would have had to shoot him or his horse.) Afterward when court was over he apologized to me, and we became good friends.

Christmas Eve, 1876, I think it was, there was a Christmas tree at the Brazell's [Brassell] schoolhouse about halfway between Clinton and Yorktown. Dr. Brazell and Mr. Dave Augustine were school trustees, and Miss Amanda Augustine and Miss Brazell taught the school. During the entertainment someone shot out the lights and a general fight took place. Some shooting was done, but no one was killed. The next morning, Christmas day, I was riding with my aunt, Mrs. Sue Summers, to the Cox place on Deer Creek. When we met Bill Cox going to Clinton, he told us about the fight. He told me that Geo. Brazell was in the county. He was the oldest son of Doctor Brazell. He was an outlaw and the State of Texas had offered a reward for him, dead or alive.

A week after this, on New Year's night, there was a big ball in Yorktown, and the Taylor gang was there and the Yorktown people was afraid they would break up the ball, so they sent a message to Clinton and Cuero, about three miles away, by someone on horseback. Most of the officers were in Cuero that night as they had a big ball there also. I was in Clinton at the courthouse when the rider came, and I told him he would find Add Killgore and Bill Meadows, deputy sheriffs, at Cuero. He then went over to Cuero.

The officers summoned a bunch of men and went direct to Yorktown, crossing the river above Clinton. I had oiled up my guns, preparing to go to Yorktown with the boys, when they came through Clinton. I waited until after midnight and then went to bed.

The Lord was with me then, as he has always been. If I had gone with that crowd, I perhaps would have gone to jail with them. A few minutes after I had gone to bed, Add Killgore came to his father's store, across the street from Sam Webb's store and residence where I roomed.

When the crowd had got to Mr. Dave Augustine's house, some of them began to talk and make threats against George Brazell and said they would not take him alive but would kill him. Add Killgore then refused to go with them and came on home. Afterwards he was a state witness in the case.

CHAPTER X
Killing of Doctor Brazell [or Brassell] and son, Bob Brazell

There have been several different stories told about this unfortunate affair. The writer was on the battlefield about sunup the next morning and found the bodies of Dr. Brazell and his son, Bob Brazell near the forks of the road, the road leading from the main Yorktown road to Dr. Brazell's residence. There seemed to have been a fight at this place. There were horses' tracks coming from Dr. Brazell's house and horse tracks coming from the main Yorktown road toward Dr. Brazell's house. There were bullet holes in several trees, showing that there was shooting both ways on the road as described.

The writer believes that there was a big battle fought near where the bodies was, with about ten men or more on each side, one crowd coming from the Yorktown road and another crowd going toward the Yorktown road from Dr. Brazell's house. The writer made his report to A. B. Davidson, district attorney for that district and sheriff at the time. Afterward when I was summoned to go before the grand jury, A. B. Davidson refused to let me go into the jury room after talking to me about the matter. The defense lawyers was afraid to have me as a witness (although they had me summoned also) as I was a special state ranger at the time of the killing.

I attended the trial at San Antonio as a witness several times but did not testify in the case. I never told anyone what I thought about the case or killing, except the county officers and the governor of the state. It was not safe to talk much in those days.

Joe Sitterle, Jake Ryan and Bill Cox were found guilty of murder in the first degree and given death sentences, but after being in jail in San Antonio about six years, the case was reversed and they made bond of twenty thousand dollars each, and finally they all came clear. Bill Cox ran off to New Mexico, and twenty years afterward he came to Cuero, Texas, and gave himself up and stood a second trail in Cuero. He came clear.

It was some time after the grand jury found the bills of indictment against the Sutton gang, as they were called, before any of them were arrested. The warrants was given to Captain Lee Hall to serve. He was camped near the old mission between Goliad and Corpus Christi. Word was sent him that Joe Sitterle and Miss Melissa Cox was going to marry on a certain night, and that all of the Sutton gang would be there. The wedding was to take place at a certain ranch house several miles above Clinton. The writer met Captain Lee Hall and his rangers at Goliad in Goliad County the day of the wedding, and we rode to Clinton that evening, getting there after dark. We camped and ate supper and fed our horses, then went to the wedding. Captain Lee Hall and his rangers surrounded the house. I then rode back to Clinton. They were dancing when we got there. Several of my cousins were there and Mrs. Sam Calhoun, Charlie Summers, Clate Summers, and my aunt, Mrs. Sue Summers. In fact quite a crowd of my kinfolks was there. They danced all night. The Sutton gang refused to fight, because the women and children were in the house.

When daylight came, the rangers picked out the men they wanted and let all the other people go home. The rangers brought all of the men that they had warrants for and placed them in jail at Cuero. Judge Clay Pleasants, the district judge, refused to give any bond to John Meadows, Bill Meadows, Bill Cox, Joe Sitterle, Dave Augustine, Jim Hester, Jake Ryan. Several others were arrested but made bond. Judge Clay Pleasants ordered them to San Antonio for safe keeping. Afterward the cases were transferred to San Antonio for trial.

Thus ended one of the greatest feuds ever in the state of Texas. At one time, there were about 300 armed men in the field. The Taylors seemed to be in the majority. At one time the Taylor gang surrounded the Sutton gang in the Gulf Hotel in Cuero, Texas and kept them prisoners for three days. The rangers finally got them to sign a compromise and the Taylor gang agreed to leave the county.

But a few days after this agreement, Jim Taylor and Bill Taylor killed Bill Sutton and Gabe Slaughter at Indianola, Texas and the governor placed a reward of a thousand dollars each for them dead or alive in the Calhoun County jail. (At the time Jim Taylor was killed in Clinton, DeWitt County, that county was the Calhoun County jail.) I have already given details of the fight when Jim Taylor was killed. Thirty-three years after the killing of Jim Taylor, the writer tried to get this reward for Captain Dick Hudson, who led the posse that killed Jim Taylor on the 27th of December, 1876 in Clinton. He was an old Confederate vet, then living in the home at Austin. Governor Lanham was then governor. Hon. A. B. Davidson fought it in the committee room and killed the bill. He said if the state paid the reward, it would have to pay interest for thirty-three years. We believe if it had come to a vote in the house, it would have carried. Captain Dick Hudson did more or as much as any one man in DeWitt County toward breaking up that terrible feud. He was a fearless, honest, upright officer.

CHAPTER XI
Illness of Captain McAnally [McNelly] and His Retirement

After scouting and fighting and riding day and night for six weeks Captain McAnally became very sick and left Austin, Texas. At that time I think he lived in Austin. Lt. Lee Hall then commanded Company B, with fourteen men under him, fifteen including himself, regular and special rangers. I arrived in Clinton, Texas. I at once got busy and rode almost day and night, summoning jurors and witnesses for the January term of court. It was at this term of court, January 1877, that the sheriff's posse of twelve men was tried for the killing of Jim Taylor, Mace Arnold and a man by the name of Hendricks.

Lee Hall and five of his rangers came to Clinton to keep the peace. Spencer Adams and myself was stationed at the bottom of the stairs to search everyone that came into the courtroom. I was also a witness for the defense at that trial. Captain Dick Hudson, deputy sheriff in the Cuero precinct, raised the posse composed of Currie Wallace, John Meadows, Bill Meadows, Kit Hunter, Joe Sitterle, Edd Sitterle, Jake Ryan, Buck McCrabb, John McCrabb, Frank Cox, Bill Cox. Each and every one came clear of murder.

The grand jury at the June term of district court in Clinton returned bills of indictments for murder against the following men for the killing of Doctor Brazell [Brassell] and the killing of George Brazell, his son. He was an outlaw, and the State of Texas had offered a reward for his body dead or alive in any jail in the state.

In a former chapter in this book. I have given the details of this fight. The writer saw the battlefield at daylight on the second day of January 1877, and details of the trial. I will now outline the talk that Judge Clay Pleasants made on that day when he refused bail to the seven defendants at the bar.

When the court was opened to hear the decision of the Judge there were thirty rangers. About ten were special rangers and I was one of them, in the courtroom. Six rangers stood on the platform, three on each side of the judge. With supreme dignity he stood and looked at the crowd for several minutes before he spoke, then he said in a calm, distinct voice, whose every tone carried conviction: "The time has come for me to announce my decision in this case. I shall do so without fear or favor, solely on the evidence as it has been presented. This county is and has been for years a reproach to the fair name of Texas. Over it have roamed bands of lawless men, committing awful crimes and outrages, murdering whom they pleased, shooting down men from ambush in the most cowardly manner possible. Here in this very room listening to me now, are murderers who long ago should have been hanged. I do not speak of prisoners at the bar, but of you who are yet free; you are murderers, bushwhackers, midnight assassins. Some of you have dared to threaten me with cowardly annonymous letters and I have had to bring state soldiers into this court of justice. I learn that you have blamed the sheriff of this county for calling upon the rangers to assist in restoring order. No, it was not the sheriff who had the rangers here. It was I who called for them and am going to see that they remain here in this county until it is as peaceful and law-abiding as any in the Union.

"I tell you now beware, the day of reckoning is surely coming, it is close to hand. When you deal with Texas Rangers you deal with men who are fearless in discharge of duty, and who surely will conquer as wicked and cowardly a murder as ever disgraced this state. Others will follow them soon. The reign of the lawless in DeWitt County is at an end."

The seven men were sent to the San Antonio jail for safe keeping. All seven of them stayed in that jail for six long years. They were finally granted bond, and each one of them made bond. John Meadows and Bill Meadows both died before coming to trial. Joe Sitterle also died before coming to this second trial. Dave Augustine was tried at San Marcos and got twenty-five years in the pen. After the higher court ruled that he was guilty, he came to my house in Cuero and stayed all night. And the next day took the train for Huntsville. There was no officer with him; when he got to the pen, a pardon was there for him, and he became a free man again.

* * *

An election was held February 24, 1877 to decide on the removal of the county seat of DeWitt County, Texas, from the town of Clinton to the town of Cuero.

Votes for the removal of the courthouse 1079
Votes against removal of the courthouse 383

The records were removed from Clinton to Cuero on Saturday, the 10th of March 1877.

(See Volume D, Page 184, minutes of Commissioners Court of DeWitt County, Texas.)

When the courthouse was removed from Clinton, that killed the town of Clinton, the oldest town in the county of DeWitt.

During 1877, most of the business houses had moved away. The large schoolhouse and the Presbyterian church were moved to Cuero. Judge Killgore moved his drug store to Yorktown, Laura Webb moved his store to Weesatche, Goliad County, and I think John and Jim Wofford sold their store to Charlie Sherman, and he moved it to Gonzales County. One by one most of the residences were moved to Cuero. For many years there had been no post office there.

Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Custom House in Laredo, Texas in 1909. A. R. Kahn is at front desk, Fred Thomas is behind him, and Mary Devine is at rear desk. Ed Cotulla stands inside the counter and others are Will May, Mr. Carpenter, and Mr. Lewis. Delony was border guard at Laredo for several months.

* * *

The killing of Martin King in Clinton occurred in the summer of 1877.

One Sunday night, Add Killgore and myself were at church when we heard some fast shooting down in town. We both ran down to Dola Davis's saloon and when we got there we found Martin King lying on the floor of the saloon on his back with his feet in the door of the saloon dead, shot several times. On the way down town, we heard horses running out of town on the Yorktown road, and Tom King passed us crying and hollering loud, saying, "They have killed my father!" He did not overtake them. They made their getaway. We also found Dola Davis badly wounded in his leg. Mrs. King said that just before the shooting, five men came to her house and asked for Mr. King and she told them he was down town. They then asked where Tom King was. She told them she did not know, but he had just run out of the back door and made his getaway. They then searched the house for them, then rode off up town. They saw Tom King running across the street toward the saloon and they began shooting at him. He ran into the saloon and out the back door, up the alley to the livery stable, got his horse, and came running back while the shooting was going on. But they had run off before he got there. He stopped and found his father dead, then jumped on his horse and ran after them. He came back in about a half an hour.

Dola Davis said he recognized two of them by the horses they rode. He said two of the men was ——— ——— and ——— ———. But Mrs. King and others said it was the ——— gang.

If anyone was ever prosecuted for the killing, I do not remember it.

* * *

In April 1877 I received an order from Governor Richard B. Hubbard to go to the Ranger camp on Medina Creek about twenty miles from San Antonio and report to Captain McNally [Lee McNelly] at once. I was deputy sheriff of DeWitt County at that time and also a special Ranger. When I arrived at the camp, I found Captain McNally, Lieutenant Lee Hall, Red Rudd, Spencer A. Adams and Kirk Lynch.

Captain McNally told me that it was reported that a bunch of Mexican outlaws were stealing horses from the King Ranch and other ranches. He was looking for more Rangers from San Antonio, but they failed to arrive. We broke up camp that night and made a forced march to Frio County.

The outlaw camp was on the San Miguel Creek on a lake or lagoon near the creek. We rode all night and arrived near the camp about daylight. Within about 200 yards of the camp we hid our horses in a thicket and took it afoot and thought we would surprise them, but they knew we were coming, had spies out and instead of surprising them, they surprised us and attacked us on three sides at once, a regular ambush. We were almost surrounded; Captain McNally ordered a retreat to our horses. As we ran we were shooting at them. I saw one man fall off of his horse; don't know if he was killed or not. When we arrived at our horses, we were ordered to stay close together. There were about forty Mexicans in the bunch, all shooting at us. Kirk Lynch's horse became excited and ran away with him. We soon lost him as it was not light yet. We thought he would turn his horse back and come to us, but we never saw him again until the next two days had passed.

I will now state his capture as he related it to us. He said that his horse began pitching with him and before he could get to run, his horse was shot and killed and his foot was fast under the horse. He threw his pistol away and held up his hands. They pulled his foot out from under his horse and took his saddle, bridle, blanket and Winchester, slicker and rope. They then made him walk back to their camp. After keeping him until they ate breakfast, they then took him about two miles from the lake or lagoon. Kirk understood Spanish. They said, "It is Good Friday. We cannot kill him today; we will tie him up to a tree and leave him until midnight; then we will kill him." They took all his clothes off of him except his underclothes, stood him up with his back to a small tree and pulled his arms back around the tree and tied his wrists together and tied his arms together above the elbows; then tied his feet together around his ankles and to the tree with buck strings. They left him all day in the hot sun without any water.

Kirk Lynch said he began to try and get loose. He tugged and strained at the strings. All day long he worked to try and get loose. The heat from his body and perspiration from great exertion caused the strings to stretch and give a little at a time. Finally they gave way so he could get one hand loose and after working all day, about sundown he untied himself. He lay on the ground for a while and rubbed his ankles until he could walk. Then he started to walk to the lake. He was nearly dead for water. When he got within about 200 yards from the lake, some Mexican outlaws saw him and came running toward him. He ran and dived into the lake and hid under a log which was in the lake. They never found him.

That night he made his getaway. He knew where a ranch was about twenty miles toward the camp. He arrived at the ranch about daylight, found some dry beef on a line and ate as much as he possibly could. He then put some inside his shirt. He then looked for a horse; couldn't find any. He found an old mule in the lot, took a small rope and made a bridle out of it. Then he pulled out for the Ranger camp on Medina Creek. He arrived there about dark; we were all glad to see him. The next morning Kirk got a horse and saddle from a ranch and left for Clinton near his home. Kirk Lynch resigned as a Texas Ranger, and so far as I know he never served again. He made a fine Ranger. He was an Irishman, not afraid of no man, much less a Mexican.

When we arrived at camp that night after the fight, we found five Rangers there. The next morning Captain McNally sent Mr. Spencer Adams to San Antonio and Austin to carry a report to the Governor. In that report he stated that in the fight with the Mexican outlaws Ranger Kirk Lynch was captured or killed by the Mexicans. He requested the Governor to send at least ten more men to help capture the forty or more Mexican outlaws in Frio County, Texas.

That night after Kirk got to camp Spencer Adams got back with five more men. We rested that night and next morning broke camp. With a company of fifteen men, we felt like we were good for forty Mexicans.

When we arrived at the Mexican camp, it was deserted. It looked about twenty-four hours old. We at once took the trail which led us to Cotulla, from there to Carrizo Springs, from there to the Rio Grande River. They made their getaway with at least fifty horses besides the ones they rode. After scouting up and down the river and all South Texas, we went into camp in Refugio County on Medio Creek. There I received orders to return to Clinton as the June term of district court would convene in about two weeks in Cuero, and I was needed in that county as deputy sheriff.

After Captain William Weisiger passed away, Mr. Peterson was sheriff of DeWitt County. The writer was deputy sheriff under him along with Rufus Neil, Add Killgore, and one or more others, I don't remember their names. I was still a special ranger, and rode for the grand jury.

Before Mr. Peterson's term expired, we left DeWitt County for several years. I was stationed at Laredo, Texas on the Rio Grande as river guard for several months.

While serving as a river guard, I noticed a tall, slim woman going over to Mexico in the boat, but I never did see her come back. I also saw a fine, large and good-looking woman coming over from Mexico to Texas. But I never did see her go back. So I figured that there was something about these two women.

About two weeks after I had noticed them going and coming, one morning when this fine-looking and large woman came over in the boat, as soon as she got up on the bank of the river, I stopped her and asked her name and and where she was going.

She became very angry and said it was none of my business what her name was and said she would report me and have me arrested for insulting her. She demanded that I let her pass. I told her I was sorry to detain her, but she must go with me to headquarters, only a few feet away. She started to run, I grabbed her by the arm and told her she was under arrest. I took her to the room where a woman guard or detective was. She took her in the room, and closed the door. I stood just outside while the woman detective searched the prisoner.

I heard a scream and opened the door just as the prisoner was trying to get out. I caught her and held her, but she fought like a tiger. I saw that she had knocked the detective down: I then put the handcuffs on her. We then both searched her and found her arms and limbs wrapped with fine lace and ribbons, and her body wrapped with fine silk. She had two gallons of mescal in hog bladders, under each arm and across her breast, making her look very portly, and her disguise was perfect. She had several diamonds worth thousands of dollars, hid in the hair of her head and she wore large ear bobs, and they contained several diamonds also.

The law does not allow, or did not allow us at that time, to place her in jail for the first offense so we took everything away from her and then let her go. She had about fifteen thousand dollars worth of smuggled goods on her body. About a month after this, she was arrested near the road bridge by another guard, (I was guarding below the bridge) and she went to the U. S. prison for five years.

A few months after this, I went back on the special ranger force again. We rode from Laredo to Brownsville and back several times by horseback. And from Laredo to Eagle Pass, and from Eagle Pass to El Paso, Texas, horseback. We were in several fights with smugglers and Mexican outlaws while out on these raids.

While we were on the border, Mr. Add Killgore became sheriff of DeWitt County. I don't think I was ever in DeWitt County while he was sheriff. I know I never held a commission under him.

* * *

It was while Captain Peterson was sheriff, and I was deputy sheriff under him, in 1879, I think it was, that the railroad was building a line from San Antonio to Kenedy. Near Kenedy a lone train robber held up the train and robbed the passengers of all of their money and jewelry. He then rode off toward Clinton. The railroad officials wired the sheriff at Cuero to look out for him.

Sheriff Peterson had me to guard the pontoon bridge at Clinton one morning. At noon, I rode into Cuero to get my dinner and see if they had heard anything from the robber. Just as I rode from Main street into Esplanade street I noticed a commotion down near the bank at a restaurant. The old P.O. was across from the bank. I also noticed an old gray horse grazing on the sidewalk. Just then I saw a man run out of the restaurant and jump on his horse, reach down and throw his reins over his horse's head, then turn and shoot at Add Killgore, also a deputy sheriff, but miss him. I then pulled out my Winchester and shot his horse from under him. He lit a-running and ran to this old gray horse on the sidewalk. He jumped on him and made his getaway. We all ran to his horse and took his saddle off and looked in his saddle pockets and blanket for money or anything else we could find. There was nothing to show who he was. He never was caught, and we never did find out who he was.

How I Became a Mechanic and Learned the Carpenter's Trade

After Larra Webb moved his store to Weesatche, Goliad County, I went to work for Bill Hasson in his carpenter shop at his home. I took the *Scientific American* and soon learned how to draw plans and cut rafters and cornice. As I understood geometry and trigometry, I soon learned to be an expert at building. I helped Mr. Bill Hasson to build several houses in Burns Station, Meyersville and other places, and I built a great many houses in the state afterward.

In the first week of March 1879, I made my last trip to Kansas with cattle. We received our herd of 5,000 head of one's and two's, yearlings, in Goliad County. They were owned by Tom Word of Goliad. Jim Summers was foreman; he lived in Cuero.

When we arrived within about forty miles of Dodge City, Kansas, it was the 4th of July 1889 and we had a heavy hailstorm and a great deal of lightning. A bolt of lightning would strike in the herd and kill two or three head and the cattle would stampede. Then it would take an hour or two to get them quiet again. After one of these stampedes, we were sitting our horses singing to the cattle, when a bolt of lightning struck a cowboy in the head. It burnt the cord in two on his hat, went through his body, and split his boots from top to bottom, killing his horse as well as himself.

He was within about twenty feet of me and I felt the shock. My horse staggered around. Jim Summers was sitting on his horse about twenty feet the other side of me from the boy. We both ran to him. Jim Summers raised the horse up, so I could pull his leg out from under his horse. We laid him on his back and closed his eyelids, that was all we could do for him. In the meantime the cattle had ran off and the other boys did not know that he was killed. Jim Summers told me to stay there with the corpse and he would go and help with the cattle. It was about two hours before daylight, and I was left alone with that dead body in the night without any light, except flashes of lightning. The wolves would howl and come up close to me. I would shoot at them and they would run off.

About sunup, Jim Summers came with the camp wagon. We put everything out of the wagon on the ground, took the water barrel off the side of the wagon and placed the corpse in the wagon. One of our Mexican remuda boys drove the wagon, and Jim Summers went with him to Dodge City and shipped the remains to San Antonio to his mother. I have forgotten the poor boy's name. Jim Summers came back with a lot of provisions or grub as the cowboys call it. We had had nothing to eat for about a week, except Navy beans, so we really feasted that day. We arrived at the river about twenty miles above Dodge City about three days after Jim got back. The dead line had been moved up to about five miles farther than when we were last there. We sold out in about a week. I cut cattle for several days. Sometimes the buyers would kick at a small animal and I would rope it and look in his mouth. You see they were all two's and three's when we got there, we had a year's growth on them.

I came back to Texas the latter part of July. A day or two after I arrived in Cuero, I rode out to Mr. John Wofford's ranch on Deer Creek to see my girl friend, Miss Jessie Wofford. While there Mr. Wofford asked me about taking down his house and moving it to Cuero. I told him it could be done, that I would save every piece of lumber in the house and put it up in as good a shape as it was then. I told him I would have to find out what it would cost to haul the lumber to Cuero. I went direct to Bill Hasson to get him to agree to haul the lumber. I had already figured out the amount of lumber that was in the house, per thousand.

So Bill Hasson and Jim Hasson hauled the lumber on ox wagons to Cuero. They both helped take down the house and I also had cousin John Calhoun and Mr. Byres of Cuero to help. I took that three-story house down and put it up again like it was. All studding in the house was morticed into the sills and into the plates of the house. There was not a spike in it. All studding was pinned with wooden pins. The largest nail in the building was eight penny, that which the weather boarding was put on with. All were wrought nails, no wire nails were made at that time.

The house is still standing in 1937, no repairs except reshingling about ten years ago. All additions I saw was a bath room. His grandson showed me a closet where the figures had never been painted out, and there on the walls were my figures I made fifty-seven years ago.

While Captain Peterson was sheriff of DeWitt County, we had lots of trouble with a gang of cattle rustlers with headquarters said to be in Gonzales County. One day while we were at the courthouse in Cuero, the sheriff received word that a certain man was in the county visiting his family. We had a warrant for that man. The sheriff ordered Rufus Neil and myself to go get him. We got to his house about noon. He lived about 200 yards from the crossing of Cuero Creek up on the hill near the road going to Hochheim.

When we walked into his house he was eating dinner. He started to jump up and pull his sixshooter, but we both had our sixshooters in our hands cocked and we told him he was under arrest. Rufus Neil then went to him and took his pistol away from him.

The lady of the house then asked us to have dinner with them. She said, "I know you will be good to my husband." We told her we would treat him alright and not handcuff him. When we had finished eating, he asked us to let him talk to his wife a few minutes. I told him he could, but he must not go out of the room. They stood near the kitchen door and talked. He had three little girls and they began to cry. He put his arms around her neck and talked very low. After about five minutes, I told him we must go. He then came with us, and we went to his horse lot down the other side of the hill from the house. On the way he stopped at a tree and took his saddle, bridle and blanket. He was very slow in doing this. I told Rufus, "We might have a fight. I think the way he's acting he is looking for some of the gang to try and take him away from us."

When we arrived at the lot, he placed his saddle on the ground and then took his rope off the saddle, made a loop at one end, and then went to the gate, fooled with it for some time before he got it open. Then he went into the lot and roped at his horse and missed him. He gathered up his rope and then roped at him again but the horse dodged and he missed. I then got mad and told him to give me that rope. I roped the horse the first throw. He did not dodge my rope. I then ran back and got on my horse again. We expected the gang to come every minute. He then tried to put on the bridle and the horse would rear up and paw at him. He finally got the bridle on and then he started to saddle him. He would jump and throw the blanket off. I jumped off my horse, picked up a corn cob and got hold of the horse's bridle, rammed this cob into his ear, and twisted his ear. He stood still and the prisoner saddled him. He then led him out of the lot, got on him, and we all rode to the house.

Courtesy Western History Collections,
University of Oklahoma Library

William P. (Bill) Longley, whose legal hanging Delony witnessed in Giddings, Texas.

He begged us to let him tell his wife and children goodbye. We hitched our horses and went into the house. It was at least a half-hour from the time we left the house until we got back. As we walked into the house we saw his wife come out of the kitchen door into the dining room. Her face was very red, and she seemed to be out of breath. Then the three little girls came running out of the kitchen. We expected a fight and had our sixshooters in our hands cocked, ready to shoot, but nothing happened. The man went and talked to his wife, picked up each child and kissed them, and then turned and walked back to us. We all got on our horses and rode down the creek.

When we got there he asked to get a drink of water. I said alright. We were both very thirsty but we thought we would let him drink first, and then each of us would drink while the other would guard the man.

He got down, slipped his bridle reins over his arm and knelt down and took a drink. Then he came up with a pistol in each hand, cocked them and said, "Now you fellows git!" We got. We ran about fifty yards up the road until the road turned out of sight. We then pulled our Winchesters and turned back running as fast as our horses could go. When we got to the creek he had run down it about 100 yards and was going in the opposite direction from his house into a field toward the river. We ran after him but when we got to the rail fence, our horses would not jump it, so we had to pull down part of the fence to get over. By that time he was out of sight. We traced him to the river, saw where he went in and where he went out on the other side. The weeds, brush and trees were thick on the other side so we did not cross over, but turned back and went to the Hell's Gate Ferry and crossed the river. We thought he would go to the __________ ___ ranch on the other side of the river. So we hunted the river bottom for him but could not find him. When night came, we went to the ranch house of ________. Mrs. __________ was at home so we requested supper and feed for our horses. We told her we would pay her for it, as we had been riding all day and was hungry and tired. After supper, we told her we were going to Cuero and rode off that way. We then went down in the woods and camped.

I guarded the ranch house until one o'clock, and then I waked Rufus Neil. He watched the house until daylight. Just at daybreak he waked me up and said he heard a horse coming toward the house. We both went up near the house, leaving our horses at camp.

When he rode up to the gate, we both cocked our Winchesters and told him he was under arrest, to get off of his horse and hold up his hands. When he got off his horse, Rufus Neil went up to him and put the handcuffs on him. By that time there was a light in the house.

Mrs. ______________ came to the door and asked, "Who is that out there?" I told her this is a sheriff's posse, and we had just captured a man we were looking for.

We asked her if we could get breakfast for three and feed for three horses. She said, "Go to the barn and feed your horses, and I will soon have breakfast ready." I asked her if Mr. ___________ was at home. She said no, she did not know where he was. Had been gone about a week working cattle. When we had eaten breakfast, we asked her how much we owed her. She said one dollar and a half. We paid her and pulled out for Cuero.

When we got back to Cuero, Captain Peterson and Add Killgore was just going to look for us, thinking perhaps we had trouble and were killed or wounded. We never did tell Add Kilgore but we told Captain Peterson about our running away from the man. He promised not to tell, and he was a sport, for he never did tell. We told him we would not prosecute the man for pulling a pistol on us and telling us to get. Poor Rufus and his wife are both dead and this does not hurt anyone now, but is a good joke on the writer. But I took my father's advice, who often told me, "Lewis, a good run is better than a bad stand," and "He that fights and runs away, will live to fight another day."

* * *

The hanging of Bill Longley in Giddings, Lee County, Texas, took place on the 11th day of October 1879. I witnessed the execution of Bill Longley for the killing or murder of Wilson Anderson. The sheriff, Jim Brown, who had charge of the execution, was the noted horse racer who was afterward killed in Chicago by a police officer.

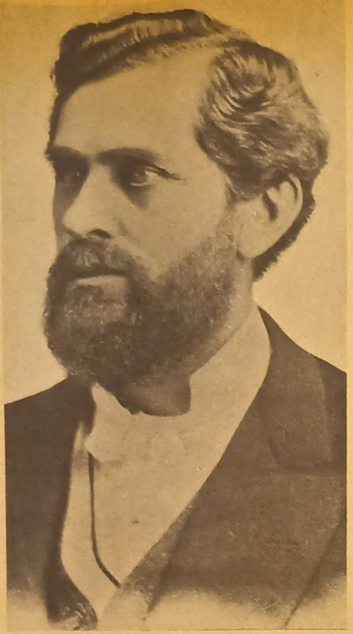
I received orders from the governor, Oran M. Roberts, while in Clinton to report to the sheriff, Jim Brown of Lee County, Texas to help keep the peace and to assist the sheriff in the execution of Bill Longley. I rode horseback from Clinton to Giddings and arrived there on the night of the 9th of October. I met armed men from all over the state, most of them special rangers like myself. On the 10th of October I was detailed to help guard the jail, as it was reported that Wes Hardin, a brother-in-law of Bill Longley's, and Jim Longley, his brother, were going to take him away from the sheriff and officers. Wes Hardin was an outlaw at the time and was thought to be out of the state.

There was a very large crowd of armed men camped near Giddings, supposed to have been the Hardin and Longley gang. We all thought that there would be an effort made by his brother, Jim to take him away from the sheriff and try and save his life.

A little while before the execution the sheriff read the death warrant or sentence to Bill Longley, and, pointing to his 200 guards, he told the people that he had worked for three months selecting his men for the occasion; that he had about the best there were in the country or state to assist him in the execution. He then asked Bill Longley if he wanted to make a talk. Bill said he did.

Looking calmly over the crowd he addressed the guards and spectators as follows: "This is a big crowd to witness the last of me. I know I am surrounded by enemies but I forgive them all for they have done against me, and I want them as well as my friends to pray for me."

Then continuing he said, "I understand that my brother, Jim, is here to kill the man who cuts the rope to hang me. If you are in this crowd Jim, don't kill anybody on my account. I knew if I was ever caught, I would have to pay the penalty which I am now paying. I hate to die, but I have killed many a man who hated to die as bad as I do now, so I know I am getting my just deserts."



Courtesy Western History Collections,
University of Oklahoma Library

Texas Governor John Ireland (above) assigned Delony to keep the peace in Abilene and later to work on John Slaughter's ranch.

When Bill finished talking, he knelt down between two priests. He had been confined in the jail at Galveston for eighteen months and while there he became a Catholic. Each priest put his hand on the man's head and then they knelt together in prayer for several minutes. When he arose he walked straight to the trap door and bowing to the crowd, said goodbye to everybody.

The sheriff immediately placed the cap over his head, the rope around his neck and bound his feet. He then got a hatchet and cut the rope. The trap door swung back and Bill Longley fell through the hole and his neck was broken. Mrs. Anderson, the widow of the man whom Longley had killed, was present at the execution with her two children. When the doctors pronounced Bill dead, she remarked that she was satisfied. Then they let him down and placed him in his coffin, the rope was coiled and laid on his breast and the lid of his coffin screwed down.

A sorrowful father took charge of the remains of his former wayward son. Bill's cousins had given him a nice suit of clothes and he was neatly dressed. Young and fine looking with dark hair and long black mustache and with a complexion as fair as a lady's, he looked so handsome before his death that it seemed a pity for him to die in such a terrible and unnatural manner.

* * *

The State Capitol at Austin, Texas burned to the ground on November 9, 1881. Most, if not all the records were destroyed. The writer so far has been unable to find any records of the daring deeds done by Captain McNally [McNelly] and Captain Lee Hall, Red Rudd and others with whom I served as a special ranger. Most of my reports was made to Captain McNally, but I often reported direct to the adjutant-general at Austin.

The writer in August 1914 lost two suit cases (stolen) out of the depot at Waco, Texas. We recovered one grip, but the other was never found. It contained all my public documents and letters. This was a great loss to the writer. Among them was my commissions as special ranger under governors Hubbard, Roberts, John Ireland and others. Also my commission as deputy United States marshal in the San Antonio district.

The writer was sworn in by Sam C. Lackey Jr. at Cuero in 1889 and during the Aransas Pass railroad strike, the writer guarded the mail train from Yoakum, Texas to Waco and from Waco to Yoakum every day for three weeks and never had a wreck or missed a run. The train was stopped quite often by the strikers with deputy sheriffs, but when they found a deputy marshal on board with the mail, the deputy sheriffs would get on the train and go to Waco or to Yoakum and just as soon as the writer got off the train, the deputy sheriff would arrest the engineer and conductor for running by a crossing without giving the proper signals. Some times the train would go by a depot and then back up to it. The new train crew did not know the road.

The Murder of a Deputy in Eagle Pass, Texas

In 1882 I was special ranger under Governor Oran M. Roberts. In the spring of 1882 I was ordered to take a regular ranger with me and go to the Rio Grande near Eagle Pass, Texas to head off an outlaw whom Captain Lee Hall was chasing and who was making toward the border. Mr. Spencer Adams went with me from Austin. We made a forced march, riding almost day and night.

One evening we rode into Eagle Pass and camped at a wagon yard, fed our horses and went to a restaurant for supper. It was a supper, compared with what we had been eating.

About ten o'clock that night, we went to a Mexican dance hall to have a talk with a deputy sheriff on duty there. After talking to him we found out our man had already crossed the river. There was also an American tending bar at the saloon in the dance hall. We left the dance hall soon after talking to these men and went back to the wagon yard and was soon asleep, as we were very tired after having ridden so far and fast.

About four o'clock, the Mexican boy who was working with the bartender at the dance hall came and waked us up. He said that the deputy sheriff had been killed, and a Mexican girl had been killed by a certain Mexican, I don't remember his name. We put on our belts and six-shooters, but left our Winchesters at camp, as we could not handle them in a crowded dance hall.

When we got there, we found the deputy sheriff and Mexican woman dead. The deputy was sitting on a table in the corner of the room with his legs crossed under him, when this Mexican became jealous of the woman. He told her he was going to kill her. She screamed and ran to the officer for protection. He tried to get up and draw his gun, but the Mexican who was running after the woman reached over and stabbed the officer in his neck and the knife cut his heart open, killing him at once. He then killed the woman.

The deputy fell over backward off the table; his feet were still on the table. The bartender pointed out the man who did the killing. He was dancing and did not see us until we were near him. We both threw our pistols down on him and told him to hold up his hands, which he did. I then put my pistol against his side and Spencer Adams took his knife away from him and was placing the handcuffs on him when I heard the bartender, call, "Look out ranger!" two or three times. I looked around and saw a Mexican man with a long knife in his hand close to me ready to stab me in the heart. I turned my pistol toward him and shot him in the breast. He fell to the floor.

There were about twenty-five Mexican men running at us with knives in their hands. We had to run for the door, leaving our prisoner behind. The bartender helped to stand the Mexicans off until we got out the door. He ran out with us, and the young man that came after us, ran out with us. We ran around the house and waited until the crowd got out. The bartender sent his boy after a doctor. The doctor soon came and looked after the wounded Mexican. Some more Mexicans came and carried him off to the doctor's office.

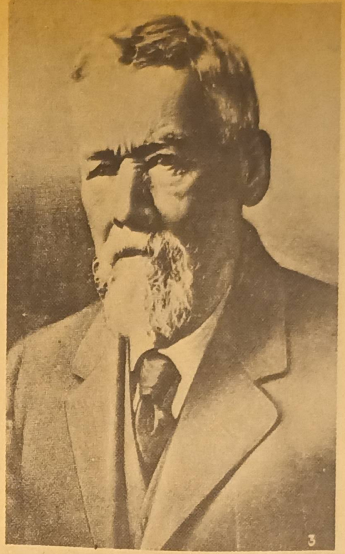
We then went to the wagon yard, fed our horses, and packed up ready to go away from there. After we had eaten breakfast, the sheriff and several deputies came to the wagon yard. A rider had been sent after the sheriff a few minutes after the deputy was killed. We went with the sheriff to the dance hall. The bartender was there cleaning up his saloon. The sheriff got busy, the justice of the peace ordered jury, and the sheriff sent one of his deputies with us out to a ranch eight miles from town where we would find the Mexican. He was there alright and was trying to knock off the handcuffs on a plow with the clevis. Another Mexican was doing the knocking.

We arrested him again, he got on his horse and we took him back to town and then turned him over to the sheriff. The sheriff asked me if I wanted to make a complaint against the wounded Mexican for attempt to murder. I told him no, that I thought he would suffer enough for what he'd done. So when he got well, they turned him loose and he went over to Mexico, where he and his brother who did the killing lived. We left that day for the Pecos River where there was a camp of rangers under Captain Hall, but he was not there when we got there. Sargeant Red Rudd had charge of the company.

In 1882, we had an election, and John Ireland was elected governor. He took office in January 1883. I went to Austin to his inaugural ball and received an appointment as special ranger under him, and his first assignment was to go to Abilene where there was an election to remove the courthouse to Abilene from Buffalo Gap in Taylor County. I will write about that job later.

* * *

While I was stationed at Laredo, Texas as a river guard, a cousin of mine, Mrs. Lydia Hook, moved there. Her husband was a carpenter, and as the Iron Mountain, or the I. & G. N. railroad, had just built to Laredo, the town was building very fast. Mr. Hook was very busy at that time. Cousin Lydia Hook was a granddaughter of James N. Smith of DeWitt County, my grandfather also. I boarded with them, and every Sunday evening we had singing at her house, and cousin Lydia would often lead in prayer.



John Slaughter, on whose ranch Delony was an undercover agent tracking cattle thieves.

One day I suggested to her that she try and get money enough donated to her to build a church or mission house. She at once got up a subscription list and went to the businessmen of the town and others. She soon had enough money to make a good payment on lumber. Mr. Hook and I saw several carpenters and five or six promised to help a day or two, free, as a donation to the church. So one Monday morning I had them all meet at a certain lot which Cousin Lydia had got deeded to the committee for a church (she was chairman of said committee).

I made out a list of lumber and went to a lumber yard and bought the lumber and nails. The lumber yard donated a nice lot of lumber also. We got busy and had that frame up and weather boarded and shingled by Saturday night. Then Mr. Hook and I finished the church and painted it white, inside and out. It looked nice. We had letters printed on the front of the church and it read like this: "Presbyterian Mission, Singing every Sunday evening, at three o'clock."

I guarded at night that month, so I put in every day until it was finished, free of charge. So I think I built the first Presbyterian Church ever built in Laredo, Texas. The first Sunday we had the church almost full. We sang and read the Bible, and Cousin Lydia Hook would lead in prayer. There were about eight Presbyterians in the town at that time.

Shortly after we got the mission started, I left Laredo and Cousin Lydia left Laredo the next year. I don't know if she ever got a preacher stationed there before she left or not. I think the church was twenty by thirty feet, with twenty benches, ten on each side. I also built two churches in DeWitt County, Texas, one at Edgar and one at Thomaston in later years.

After leaving Laredo I was given the job of scouting up and down the river watching smugglers for several months.

* * *

In the spring of 1883, I think it was, I was camped at or near Tom Been's [Roy Bean] store, afterward known as Langstry [*sic*]. We were ordered to Buffalo Gap in Taylor County, Texas to keep the peace in that county.

They had an election to move the courthouse and Abilene won out. There were two factions in the county. One wanted to keep the courthouse and records in Buffalo Gap and the other wanted to move the courthouse and records to Abilene.

The Buffalo Gap crowd was headed by Mr. Cunningham and the Abilene crowd was headed by Judge Bowyer, a lawyer and others. They were determined to move the records to Abilene on the T. P. Railroad, and the other gang wanted to prevent it. I was then serving as a sargeant and had four men under me. We five rangers were camped there for several weeks, Tom Mabin and J. M. Britton and myself, with two other rangers whose names I don't remember. A company of state troops was also stationed there.

The day when the records was to be moved to Abilene, I thought there would be several men killed. In order to keep down a fight we closed up the only saloon in Buffalo Gap. There were several six-shooters drawn on men during the day, but we made them put them down. We made no arrests but kept the peace and the records was moved to Abilene without a fight.

* * *

In 1883, while I was stationed at Buffalo Gap, I was in Abilene one day and met Colonel [John] Slaughter. While we were talking, he said he would like for me to go to his ranch and help catch cattle rustlers. He said he lost several hundred head of cattle every year. He said he knew if I could work up the evidence and turn it over to the sheriff he would make the arrests and summon the witnesses I gave him and I wouldn't have to go to court at all, and no one would find out I was [not] just a cow hand working on the ranch.

He said he would give me $125 per month and feed my horse and myself. I told him I would take it up with the governor when I went back to Austin. I told him I could not go to work for him until January 1884, as I wanted to go home to Clinton to see my father and rest up a while, and spend Christmas with my folks.

In January Governor Ireland assigned me to work on Colonel Slaughter's ranch in north Texas. His ranch was open, not fenced, and covered parts of several counties. While there I worked as a cowhand every day, but kept my eyes open. The foreman had instructions to give me free range. He was the only one that knew I was a ranger at the ranch. After I had been there about three months, the sheriff had three or four cattle rustlers in jail. After I had been there about six months, the foreman had been missing some fat beef steers every week or two and told me he thought someone was killing and butchering and selling the fat steers.

I had already thought that some squatters on a piece of state land about twenty miles down from the ranch house were stealing fat cattle from the ranch. I had found out that they sold fresh beef in the nearby towns. So one evening I rode to the edge of the ranch near their house and wandered up and down across the prairie until dark. I then rode toward their house about an hour after dark. I rode up to the lot very slow and quiet.

I saw a light in the lot house, and I sat on my horse and listened. I could see several men around the light like they were working at something. It was a dark night. Soon a man came out of the house to a vat or pit nearby. He was carrying something. As soon as he passed me, I said hello, loud. The light went out in the lot house, and the men ran to the vat and I heard the splash of the hide when it fell in. He kept going.

Two men came running to the gate. Both had pistols in their hands. They said, "Who are you?" I told them I was Jim Calloway and that I was working for the Slaughter ranch. I told them that I had been riding the range and had got lost, as I had not been working here very long, and I saw a light and came to it thinking I could get someone to direct me to the ranch house. They both knew me, had seen me often. They said come this way and I rode after them. I was very uneasy as I thought they might try to kill me. We rode about 200 yards from the house and found a trail or road. They told me to follow it and it would take me to the gate of the ranch. I thanked them and rode off in a trot. I knew where the gate was as well as they did.

After riding about a mile or more, and thinking I was far enough so they could not hear my horse running, I raced fast as I could to the ranch house. The foreman said to me when I rode up to the lot, "Where you been?" I said I had got lost. The other cowboys laughed and said, "Town kid!" After I had eaten supper, I motioned to the foreman and walked out toward the lot, saying I wanted to look after my horse. The foreman came out to the lot and I told him what I had found out. So the next morning, the foreman rode off and said he was going to town for mail.

That day the sheriff arrested two men that were selling fresh beef in some town about forty miles away. He placed them in jail and then that night he went to the house I had visited and found the hide of the beef they killed that night and several other hides in the vat. All the brands had been burnt off and most of the hair was off them. I did not have to testify in the case.

I stayed there until the first of December 1884 and then pulled out for Austin. I rode to Abilene and shipped my horse to Fort Worth. Rode from there to Clinton where my father lived. I spent Christmas with my folks.

My next assignment was in January 1885 on the Clements boys case. I will write about that later. Colonel Slaughter saw me in Fort Worth and settled with me. He said all the cattle rustlers had left the country and he thanked me very much, he said, for my good work.

The Capture of the Clements Brothers and their gang

Bob Clements and Bill Clements were horse thieves and outlaws and they had a gang of eight or ten men with them. In the spring of 1885, the Clements gang stole several fine horses from Runge's ranch in Karnes County, Texas and several more good horses from the Weldon ranch in DeWitt County, Texas.

I received a letter from Captain Lee Hall at Goliad while in Clinton at my father's house. He said he had been instructed by the governor of Texas (John Ireland) to detail me to track the Clements gang and to find out their hiding place and as soon as I found out their headquarters, to report to Captain Lee Hall at Goliad. He stated that they had gone through Gonzales County on their way to Louisiana and were supposed to be hiding in the Yawa Swamp near Navasota between the Colorado River and the Brazos River.

I left Clinton at once and went to Gonzales horseback and made some inquiries and found out that eight men had gone through the county, each man leading a horse and all of them fine and fat-looking horses. I at once took the trail and from time to time I could hear where they had passed. I lost the trail in Washington County on the Brazos. I then went to Navasota and scouted around for several days, but could not locate them.

I then went to the Allen Convict Camp, or farm, on the Brazos River joining the Yawa Swamp. I told the sergeant who I was and made an application for a guard. This was on Saturday. I stayed at the farm and Sunday I rode all day around the swamp, looking for a trail or horses tracks, but found none. Monday I went to work guarding convicts. Every Sunday I looked for a trail into the swamp. I told the sergeant that if I did not return some Sunday night, he would know I had resigned and was at work again for the state at my old trade.

I had been guarding convicts about five weeks when one Sunday I found a trail leading into the swamp. For several miles I was walking and leading my horse most of the time when about five o'clock in the evening I heard someone say, "Halt, put up your hands." My hands went up. A man had a Winchester drawn on me. He ordered me to unbuckle my belt and throw it with my sixshooter on the ground. He then told me to go on by him on the trail. As soon as my horse got near him he went to my horse and took my Winchester out of the scabbard, then told me to drop my bridle reins. I did so at once. He then ordered me to put up my hands, my back to him, and he then searched me for papers, but found none. He took my pocket knife and money. He then asked me my name. I told him I did not think it was any of his business.

I said, "Who are you? Tell me your name."

He laughed and said, "We are pardners." He asked me a great many questions, where I was going and where I was from? I didn't answer any of them. I told him to take me to his boss at the camp.

He says, "How do you know we have a camp?" I told him that I was no fool, that I knew they had a camp and I was trying to find it when he held me up.

He then told me to walk ahead and follow the trail. He led my horse and kept his pistol on me full-cocked. I was afraid it might go off accidentally. We did not go very far until we came to the camp. As soon as I had got to the camp, I knew both of the Clements boys from pictures I had seen of them.

Bob Clements said, "Who have you got there?"

The man said, "I think he is a dick, but I couldn't find any papers on him." They made me undress and pull off my boots. I thought I was a dead rabbit then, and I began to pray to the good Lord for help (to myself, not out loud). I had my commission inside of my boot soles and they did not find them. That is one time I lied to save my life. I told them that my name was Willis Arrington. I took a chance. I did not know but what some of them knew Willis Arrington, who had been in some trouble in DeWitt County. They seemed to know all about him, but none of them knew him personally.

They asked me where I lived? I told them I lived in Gonzales County, close to the river. I told them that the mare I was riding I had stolen from Dick Hudson in DeWitt County. I was riding a good blooded mare raised by Jim Murphree at Thomaston. We soon had supper and they invited me to eat with them. They told me to feed my horse and make myself at home, but they took good care of my guns, placing them with their rifles on the ground and a man stood guard over them, all night.

After we had supper, we all played cards until midnight, when we went to bed. They let me put on my clothes and my boots, after they had searched them. I got my saddle and placed it on the ground for a pillow, spread down my blankets, and went to sleep. They waked me up when breakfast was ready. After asking me a good many questions, they decided to let me go as I told them I wanted to go to Louisiana; that I had an uncle living in Louisiana, and as the law was after me, I wanted to make my getaway, and if they would show me the way out of the swamp and how to get across the Navasota River, I would be on my way.

They said that they had been camped there about a month, hunting and fishing and sometimes they would trade horses with the farmers and buy and sell horses. That was why they had these horses on hand. There were four extra horses in the bunch, and two had the Weldon brand. Most of the brands were picked out so you could not tell what they were. I think they had more horses hid out somewhere else. There were eight men in this crowd, and all well armed. They sent a man with me and gave me back my guns, knife and money. I offered to pay them for feeding my horse and myself, but they would not take any pay. They treated me very nice, and I hated to report them.

We crossed the river and perhaps the man rode about ten miles with me, then shook hands with me and wished me good luck. I rode on at a slow gait, until about ten o'clock, due north. I rode up a high hill and while on top, I took my field glasses and rode off the side of the road and looked through the brush and saw the man on a hill about a mile off watching me. I rode until dark, camped and fed my horse, and ate a lunch that the cook gave me at the camp.

I rested about two hours, then I rode for Navasota, about twenty-five miles or more, got there about four o'clock in the morning. I sent a wire to Captain Lee Hall at Goliad. Next morning about eight o'clock, I received a wire saying, "We are leaving for Cuero to take the train for Navasota. Wait for us." The next evening they arrived at Navasota. Captain Lee Hall, Red Rudd, Spencer A. Adams, Bob Williams (known as the Kid Ranger), and Bill Temilton. That night we left Navasota about three a.m. before daylight and made the camp (where I left the outlaws) about daylight, but they were all gone.

The camp looked like it was about two days old. They must have left the evening after I was there, in the morning. We took the trail and crossed the Navasota River at the same place I crossed. We followed the trail the other side of the river to Huntsville, when it split. Five men leading five horses turned to the left, and three men leading three horses kept to the right.

Captain Lee Hall and myself turned to the right and Red Rudd, Spence A. Adams, Bob Williams and Bill Temilton, turned to the left. We overtook the three men with the horses near Red River and captured them without a shot or fight. Neither one of the Clements boys was with the gang we captured. We brought them to Navasota and placed them in jail for safekeeping.

The next day Red Rudd and the other rangers arrived at Navasota with Bob and Bill Clements and three other prisoners. They left for Houston that day. Most of the outlaws were indicted in Karnes County, Texas. They were taken to Karnes City and placed in jail. They were afterward tried and convicted. The horses were returned to their owners.

* * *

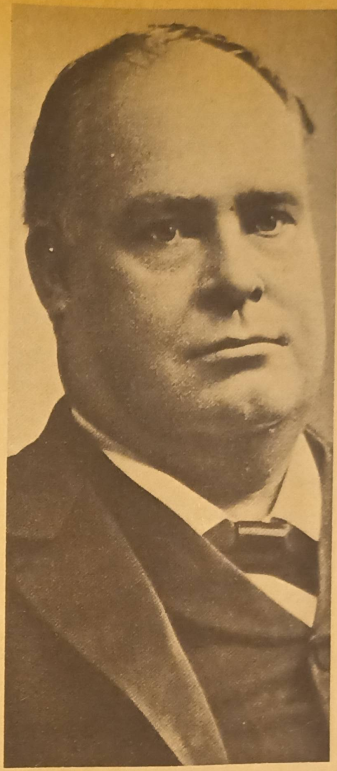
A few days after the capture of the Clements gang, I went to Austin and received my pay, $300, for the trailing of the Clements gang and their capture. While there I was awarded the contract to do the carpenter's work on Prairie View College at Hempstead, Texas. The college was built out of stone quarried at Navasota and shipped to Hempstead. We made the frames for the doors and windows and set them in the wall for the rock men.

I finished the building by the first of September and turned it over to the state in 1885. John Ireland was governor. I then went back to Navasota and opened a grocery store, with a man for a partner by the name of West. The store was known as West and Delony. The next year 1886, there was an overflow on the Brazos River that destroyed all of the crops on the Navasota and Brazos rivers, and as we had sold groceries to a great many farmers on credit and they were not able to pay their bills, we lost quite a lot of money.

In the spring of 1887 we sold out our store. My father was in Navasota helping in the store. He went back to Clinton to his home, and I went to Dallas. I was in very bad health, had some kind of kidney trouble. Went to Bets and Bets of Dallas for treatment. They cured me within a month and I went to contracting in Dallas.

I built Machinery Hall at the Fair Grounds, and afterward I was employed by the Fair committee to take charge of the art department under Mrs. Sidney Smith. I uncrated pictures and hung them on the walls and guarded them day and night. I slept upstairs in the department. There were guards downstairs on the first floor walking all night.

I worked after that every fall for the Fair for five years until Mrs. Sidney Smith resigned. One night I heard a noise like rats cutting. I lay and listened at the noise and came to the conclusion that it was someone cutting glass. I got up and dressed, took my sixshooter in my hand and went into the room where the noise was. The light from below shone dimly in this room. I saw two men at a show case, and one of them was cutting the glass so that he could take out the jewelry.



To Delony, James Stephen Hogg (above), under whom the author served, was "the best governor Texas ever had."

I could only see the legs of the men under the table. I shot at them and one fell down. The other grabbed a valise and ran out on the back gallery. The other man got up and ran out also on the gallery. I then ran to the door on the stairway and unlocked it so the guards could come up and help me. I don't know how many robbers were in the building. We ran out on the gallery just in time to see them get off the trestle benches. They had put one tall trestle on top of another. As each bench was about eight feet high that made them a ladder so they could get up to the back gallery. They then cut a hole in the window light so they could get their hand in and unlatch the bolt and raise the window.

They got several thousand dollars worth of diamonds, watches and rings, etc. One of the robbers made his getaway with the valise, climbing over the wall. He had another trestle bench leaning against the wall. The wounded man couldn't walk and was taken to a hospital. There was no guards at the back of this building, although there was several guards inside of the grounds.

We phoned the sheriff's office to watch all out-going trains. Next morning I took the first street car to the city. I watched every train that went out from the station. About nine o'clock, I saw a man at the back of the station with a suitcase that looked just like the one the robber had, and as I was watching him I could see he was uneasy. He kept watching the police, and when one would go toward him he would go up against the wall where they could not see him easily. I was sure he was a crook, and I thought he was the robber.

I was dressed in plain clothes and had my star hid, so he paid no attention to me. I followed him wherever he went. In a short while, two trains pulled up, side by side, getting ready to depart. At that time no trains were enclosed at the steps. You could go up one side and down the other without being noticed. I saw him go up the steps. I ran under the car and came up on the other side just in time to see him come down the steps. I ran after this man and as I ran I motioned to a policeman. He came running also. The man was just ready to get on the other train when we arrested him. He said he was a salesman and represented a jewelry firm. When we opened his suit case, I was sure we had the right man. The police wanted to take the suit case to the station with the man, but I told them that I was going to take the suit case to the fair grounds and if the parties could identify the contents, I would bring it to the station at once; and if they did identify the contents, would then bring the man with the suit case to the station. As soon as they saw the contents, they at once claimed it. We then went to the hospital, and the wounded man confessed and claimed the suit case and told all about how they had planned the robbery. The man only had a flesh wound and soon got well. He was only given two years in the pen, but his partner got ten years for burglary. This was the first year I worked at the fair, and it gave me a good boost with the association.

* * *

In the fall of 1885, I was at the P.O. in Navasota standing in line waiting to get my mail. There were about fifteen or twenty negroes standing in line to see if they had any mail. The negroes were very saucy and insulting toward the white folks. There were about eight negroes to one white person in Grimes County, Texas at that time. It was a Republican County and had some time before this elected negroes to the state legislature at Austin.

I had been standing in line for about twenty minutes when a friend of mine saw me and called to me, and I stepped out of line to talk to him. A big negro man walked up and took my place in line. When I turned to go back to my place in the line, I saw this tall, large negro man standing in my place. I told him to go back and get in line, as that was my place. He said, "I got as much right to stand here as any damn white man!"

I had a pair of large gauntlet gloves in my hand, and when he said that I slapped him in the face with them and knocked him backwards. Before he could hit me I hit him in the jaw and knocked him down. I then kicked him in the face with my boot heel. My friend pulled me off of him and said, "Don't kill him!"

By that time I got to the window and received my mail. My friend and I walked off together. The negro was still lying on the floor. I think he was afraid to get up until I left.

The next day there was to be a circus in town and I had a sweetheart living in the country at Roans Prairie about eight miles from Navasota. So the next day I hired a buggy and horse and went out to see my girl and brought her to town to see the circus. We stayed at a hotel for dinner and went afoot with a crowd of young people to the show.

The city of Navasota had some very muddy streets at that time. There was a plank sidewalk leading from the hotel to the fair grounds about two-and-a-half feet wide. When the show was over that evening, I with my girl was walking in front of our crowd. As we came out of the tent, I noticed the officers making the negroes go to the left side of the street, and all of the white folks go to the right of the street. When we got down in town about half-way to the hotel, the negroes began to cross over to the right side of the street and mix with the white people. I looked and saw a big negro man and a negro woman standing on the plank walk in front of us. When we got to them, I told him to move on out of the way or step off the sidewalk so we could get by. There was a crowd of negroes just the other side of him. He stood in the middle of the sidewalk and said he had as much right to be on that sidewalk as any damn white man he knew of, and if I was in a hurry I could go around him in the mud.

I pulled my pistol and hit that negro on the head and knocked him down. I reached over and hit him again. My girl grabbed my arm and said, "Put up that pistol, and let us go!"

The negro woman had run off hollering and crying, and the whole bunch of negroes were running back across the street in the mud. We all went to the hotel and were waiting for supper. We boys were upstairs playing cards. The ladies were down in the parlor playing music and singing. Mr. Moreland, the owner of the hotel, (a relative of mine), came up and called me out of the room and told me that the marshal of the city, (Mr. John Farris), wanted to see me. I went down with him into the parlor. He introduced me to Mr. John Farris.

Mr. Farris shook hands with me and then stepped back and looked me over. He said, "Well I will be damned." (I was a very small man at that time, only weighed 120 pounds.) He said, "Are you the man that knocked a negro man down on the street this evening?"

"I don't know what negro man you are talking about," I told him. "But I knocked a sorry negro down this evening for swearing in front of the ladies and refusing to move on out of the way."

He said, "Are you the man that knocked a negro man down at the post office yesterday?"

I said, "I do not know what you are talking about, but I did knock a negro man down at the post office yesterday."

He said, "You come to the city hall tomorrow morning at ten o'clock."

We all went to the show that night. The negroes seemed to be very quiet that night. I took my girl home that night and came back to the hotel. The next morning I was at the city hall on time. The hall was crowded with people and I wondered what in the world so many people was doing there. After the clerk had read the minutes, I saw what was the matter. There was to be a night marshal appointed. After two or three applications were read, Mr. John Farris stood up and said, "Is Mr. Delony in the court room?" I stood up and answered.

He said, "Come up on the platform, sir." He said, "I want to know what right you have to carry a sixshooter." I handed him my commission. After he had read it, he then handed it to the mayor and commissioners. They all read it and then handed it back to me. He said, "You may be seated."

John Farris, the marshal, then said, "Mr. Mayor, I nominate Mr. L. S. Delony as night marshal of the city of Navasota."

I jumped up and said, "Mr. Farris, I cannot serve."

"Why not? You are living here now and have been here for some time."

I said, "You know why? I might be called away at any time."

He said, "If at any time you are called away, I will serve until you come back." He said, "Mr. Mayor, I move that Mr. Delony be appointed night marshal of the city of Navasota with a salary of $65 per month." One of the aldermen seconded the motion and I was appointed the night marshal of Navasota, Texas. I served about two years under Mr. John Farris. Afterward Farris moved to Cuero and we lived as neighbors for several years after I married and moved to Cuero. I was with him the day before he died and we talked about old times. He died in April 1908 at Cuero.

* * *

While I was living in Navasota, I joined the Navasota Guards, a military state company, in 1885. We had an election and I was elected sergeant of the company. As I had attended a military college four years in Baton Rouge, I knew military tactics and drilled the company for about a year. In August 1886, we attended an encampment of state soldiers. While at the encampment, we had a shooting match, shooting at a target 500 yards off. Out of a possible 300 shots, I rang the bell 291 times and the State of Texas gave me a badge or medal as the best shot in Texas. I think that medal is in the family yet. We had a great time at encampment at Lampasas, fighting sham battles with blank cartridges. We would carry a sack of hay and run about 200 yards, fall down on the ground behind this sack of hay, and shoot at the enemy—lots of fun and hard work.

I was married in Dallas to a Mrs. Lee, who was born in Salem, Virginia. Her first husband was a first cousin to General Fitzhugh Lee. I was married on the 25th of December, 1887. My son, William Lewis Delony, was born in Dallas on the 10th of October, 1888.

I moved from Dallas to Cuero in November 1889. Fielding Breeden was sheriff of DeWitt County at that time and in December 1889, he had me sworn as riding bailiff for the grand jury. I had many thrilling experiences while deputy sheriff under Mr. Breeden, but space in my book will not allow me to mention them. We had no killings during the year I served under him that I remember. Mr. Breeden died in February 1891 in Cuero, and Mr. Tom Stell was appointed county sheriff to succeed him.

I never served as a regular deputy sheriff under Stell as I was contracting and building and could not afford to work on the salary he paid. I was making plenty of money those days and had a large family depending on me for support. All the children were at home with me for several years after I moved back to Cuero.

I was sworn in as riding bailiff for the grand jury almost every term of district court and was sworn in as an officer of the court. I guarded juries back and forth to their meals and was often sworn in by Judge Wilson and given a bench warrant to serve on someone, and ordered to bring the body into court. I also helped to investigate certain crimes that took place in DeWitt County.

While Tom Stell was wild and reckless in his young days, after he married he settled down and made one of the very best citizens DeWitt County has ever had. As a sheriff he had no peer. He was fearless as they make them. He brought some of the most desperate and dangerous criminals this country ever had to justice, or I may say at least to trial. I won't say that he was the only sheriff that went out of the state to get criminals, but I do say that I believe he caught and brought more men from other states to Texas for trial than any other sheriff in Texas. We had several cold-blooded murders while Tom Stell was sheriff. I will mention some of his activities in some of the cases later. Some of the killings took place after I left Cuero.

One term of district court, while I was riding bailiff for the grand jury, Judge Wilson called me before him and handed me two bench warrants. They were for a negro man and his daughter living about five miles from Yoakum near the Lavaca County line.

When I got there and arrested them, they did not have any way to come to Cuero, so I told them they would have to walk to Cuero and we pulled out. After they had walked several miles, I felt sorry for the girl and stopped them and told her to get up behind me on my horse. She did so, and the man pulled off his shoes, tied the strings together, and lit out. I could hardly keep up with him, he walked about six miles an hour. We made Cuero in about three hours. When we arrived at court, the judge remanded them both to jail. The next morning the girl was taken before the grand jury, and think he also went before the jury. The grand jury indicted him for an assault on his daughter. He afterward went to the pen.

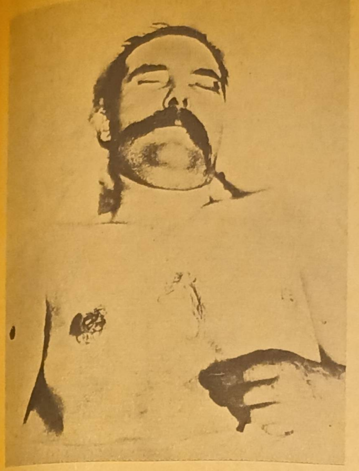
* * *

In 1892 the Hogg and Clark campaign was high drama in Texas politics. In August 1892, the Democratic convention was to be in Houston. I went to Houston the day before the convention and while sitting around the hotels, I heard a plan to pack the convention with Clark friends, to occupy it so it would be impossible for the regular Hogg delegates to be seated. The convention was to be held in the car shed, a very large building open on all sides, and it could have been filled with a crowd or mob.

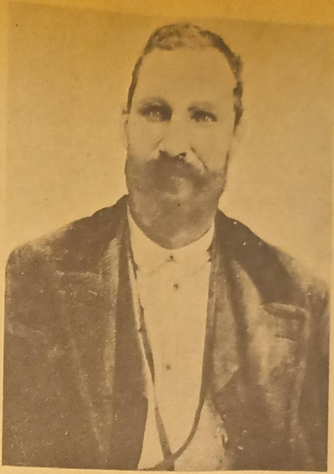
I at once reported to Gov. [Stephen F.] Hogg just what was going on. I suggested to the governor that we fence in the shed. I was then a contractor and builder as well as a special ranger. I told him that the Carpenters Union was in session, I could get plenty of men, and I knew a lumber yard that was in favor of Hogg. He then gave me orders to have it done. I went before the carpenters and made a talk to them, and about fifty men said they would help to fence the car shed that night. Captain Bill McDonald and I went to a lumber yard and got lumber, wire and nails.

So that night we fenced in the car shed and put two turn-stiles for the delegates to go through. At sunup next morning, I was at one gate and Bill McDonald at the other. Thousands of Clark friends with badges on milled around for several hours very mad and cussing us, but they did not get into the convention hall until the regular delegates were seated and the chairman elected.

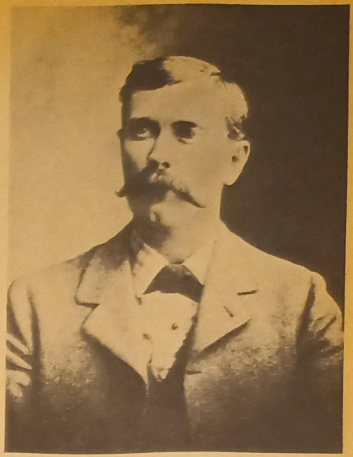
Mr. Fritz, the state Democratic chairman, called the convention to order. Mr. T. G. Brown, floor manager for the Hogg forces, made the nomination speech and called for a roll call of counties.



John Wesley Hardin in death.



John Selman



George Scarborough

Photos Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Mayor Mattock of Fort Worth, for the Clark faction, made his nomination and asked for a viva voce vote. It was refused.

The chairman had no ears for an appeal from his ruling and at this moment the Democracy of Texas was on the point of a split. Mattock and Jonathan Lane were pleading for peace, while Beauregard Bryan, a Hogg delegate, was shouting, "Bolt, damn you, bolt!"

The Clark partisians were crying. "Sooey" and "Turn Texas loose!" The bolt was on, and within a few minutes the Clark men had withdrawn and gone over to the other side of the shed. They held a rump convention and nominated Clark as an independent candidate against Governor Hogg.

Governor Hogg's platform was adopted and he was nominated with 607 convention votes, Clark receiving 108 votes. In the Hogg convention Captain Bill McDonald was appointed sergeant-at-arms, and I was appointed assistant-at-arms.

We had our hands full trying to keep the peace. There was at least a dozen fights on the platform, mostly umbrellas and fists. Some pistols were drawn but we disarmed them at once. We made no arrests but kept the peace. I served under Governor Hogg as a special ranger for four years, he was a great man, and the best governor Texas ever had.

The Capture of Wesley Hardin

Wes Hardin was captured in the State of Florida and brought back to Texas. He was the most noted outlaw in the State of Texas. After he had served years in the pen, he was pardoned and came back to Cuero, Texas. His family lived near there. Afterward his son John Hardin drove a mail coach from Yorktown to Little Chicago in DeWitt County. Wes Hardin claimed to have reformed and was going to preach the gospel to sinners. Hardin left DeWitt County a short time after his release in 1893 and went to Pecos City.

In 1894 John Wesley Hardin, the notorious outlaw and gunman. arrived in El Paso, Texas from Pecos City with the avowed purpose of preaching the gospel with his guns. El Paso was the widest-open town in the state. The saloons and political gambling halls never closed their doors at night or on Sundays. Indeed most of the drinking and gambling was done at night, and there was pistol plays and shooting nearly every night.

Hardin's reputation preceded him. He was an expert with the pistol and a dead shot from the hip with either hand. Yet there were at least two men in El Paso anxious to mix it with Hardin. Constable [John] Selman, who has fourteen notches on his old .45 Colt's sixshooter, his last victim being the notorious Sam Bass, outlaw. [Editor's Note: Delony or his typesetter erred. Selman had killed a man named Bass Outlaw, an ex-Texas Ranger and no relation to Sam Bass. This seems to be a mistake of the printer.] The other man who wanted to shoot it out with Wes Hardin was George Scarbrough [Scarborough], deputy United States marshal who had killed several men. These two men wanted to try conclusions with Hardin. Selman finally killed Hardin, and Scarbrough evened up by killing Selman.

After Hardin had been in El Paso several months, he one night entered the Gem Gambling Rooms, (where the Fisher Hotel now is) and tried to break up a crap game. Failing in this he went up against roulette and went broke. Drawing his gun Hardin announced his intention to take from the game all the money he had lost. He took several hundred dollars of gold and bills and invited anyone in the hall who objected to his method of gambling to step into the open and begin to smoke. As no one of the hundred people in the place wanted to see Hardin's smoke, he walked out with the money. Shortly after the Gem holdup, Hardin walked into the Wigwam Saloon run by Mike Collins (where the Wigwam Theater is now). He took a drink with the proprietor and said, "Mike, I believe I will go in partnership with you in this saloon."

"Alright," was Collins' reply, and without ever paying a dollar into the business Hardin became Collins' partner, simply because the latter was afraid to say no. But Hardin's finish was drawing near, and he seemed to appreciate his danger after Selman and Scarbrough tried to pick quarrels with him. He sobered up and showed an inclination to avoid those two men.

On August 18, 1895, Policeman Selman (son of the constable) arrested a woman friend of Hardin's on a charge of vagrancy, and the following night, John Selman and Hardin met in The Acme saloon on San Antonio Street (just west of the present Little Caples building) and got into a quarrel over the matter. Selman finally invited Hardin to get out in the middle of the street.

"You go out and wait for me," said Hardin, "and when I come, I will come smoking." Selman went out, and a couple of friends persuaded Hardin to "shake" for the drinks. Outside Selman met E. L. Schackleford, who was passing and later invited Selman to take a drink. When Selman entered the door, Hardin, who was facing the bar mirror, saw him, and his hand flew to his hip pocket. But for once Hardin was not quick enough. Selman's gun smoked first and Hardin slipped to the floor with a bullet through his head. Hardin's friends said he could shoot over his shoulder by mirror sight; he practiced at a mirror until he could, with his back to the target and his gun on his shoulder, hit a silver dollar eight times out of ten at twenty feet. Selman was tried and acquitted because everyone was glad to get Hardin out of the way. But George Scarbrough was not satisfied, and it was not long before he and Selman were quarreling. Several months later, these two men one night walked out of the Wigwam Saloon together and were talking in the alley, between the Wigwam saloon and the present Union Bank. When shots were heard, a crowd rushed into the alley and found John Selman dead on the ground, and Scarbrough with a pistol in his hand standing over the dead man.

Brave Man Who Closed Gambling Halls in El Paso, Texas

During all of these exciting times, there was one man in El Paso who was feared by all the gunfighters, and that man was John Milton, former chief of police and son of the war governor of Florida. Milton did not know what fear was and when Mayor Johnson ordered the gambling houses in El Paso closed. Milton closed them and kept them closed until they were opened by action of the city council. After resigning as chief of police, Milton went to work for the Wells-

Fargo Express Company. His train was held up in Arizona and when the robbers appeared at his open car door and ordered him to put his hands up, he grabbed his pistol and killed one of them and wounded another. They shot his arm off, but they did not get his gold and silver bullion. Oscar Scarbrough went out to Arizona and was killed by highwaymen; he was the last of El Paso's gun fighters.

Mannen Clements, who was mysteriously shot and killed a few years ago, lacked the courage to make a success in that line. Still Clements was counted as a dangerous man.

A Prize Fight Prevented
February, 1896

I was living in Cuero, Texas in 1896. One morning I received a telegram from Governor Culberson to come to Austin and see him.

I left the next morning early and rode horse-back to Austin that day and got in communication with the Governor. He told me he wanted me to go to El Paso and help prevent the fight between Fitzsimmons and Maher. He had me sworn in as a Special Ranger that night, and I took a train that night for El Paso, Texas. I sent my horse and saddle by express. I stayed in El Paso about three weeks.

While on duty with City Marshal John Selman, I helped to arrest thirty burglars and put them in jail.

One night an El Paso gambler and a deputy sheriff from Greenville, Texas got into a quarrel, and the gambler drew a pistol on the deputy sheriff. I told him to put up his pistol or I would arrest him. He then shot at me; I was only about ten feet away from him. I dodged down and fell on my knees, and the bullet went over my head. I heard it whistle as it went by.

He thought he had hit me and ran into the dark. I shot at him three times. I could not see him good, but I put one bullet through his hat and another through his coat just under the left arm. I then stopped shooting, as there were so many people in the streets, I was afraid I would hit one. Other Rangers came running up and we arrested them both and put them in jail.

There were several hundred men in the streets, with sixshooters in their hands shining in the light. Most all tough characters. General W. H. Mabry, our State Adjutant General, came to me and told me to put up my pistol. I did so and went on with them to the jail.

The fight was pulled off on an island in the Rio Grande River, near Langtry, where Judge Been [Bean] lived and he was the law beyond the Pecos River.

I followed the fighters to Langtry, Texas. I was very anxious to see the fight, but was ordered back to El Paso by the Governor to guard the banks and stores in the city, as the city was still full of thieves. There were thousands of the worst-looking men I ever saw; some had no ears, either bitten or shot off. Some gotch-eyed, and one-eyed, broken noses. and lots of them limping from gun-shot wounds. They were from all over the world. Most of them were from New York and Chicago.

Bank Robbery in Wichita Falls, Texas, in February 1896

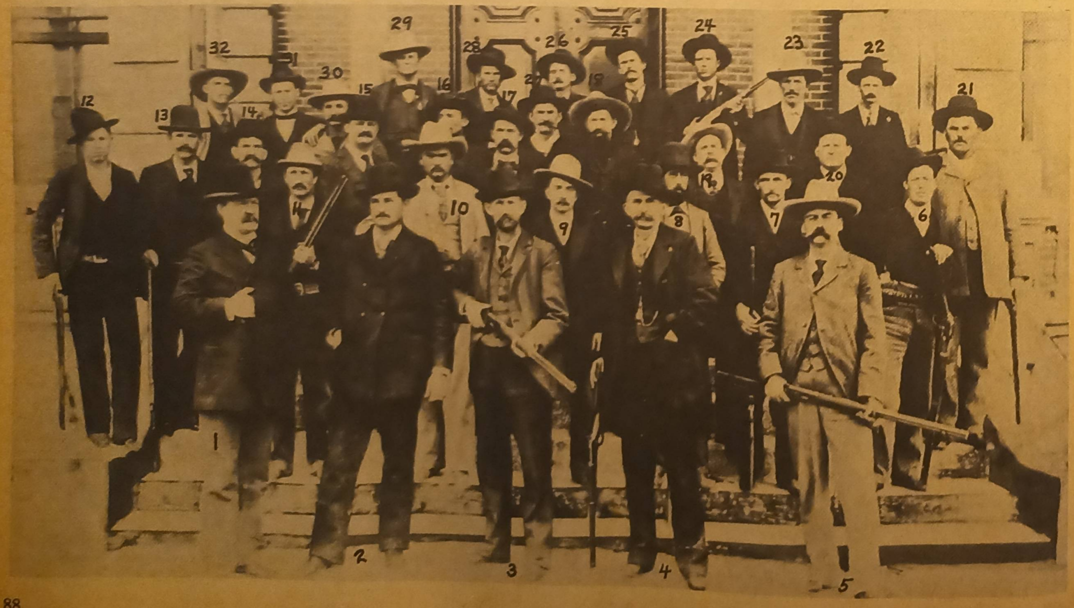
After the fight at Langstry [*sic*] between Fitzsimmons and Maher, while at El Paso I received a wire from Governor Culberson ordering me to go to Wichita Falls, Texas as the bank there had been robbed. The governor ordered me to meet Captain Bill McDonald at Fort Worth and go with him to Wichita Falls to help catch the robbers. I shipped my horse to Wichita Falls and went to Fort Worth.

I met Bill McDonald and Sergeant [W. J. L.] Sullivan in Fort Worth. We all took the train for Wichita Falls. When we arrived in Wichita Falls nearly everybody was gone looking for the robbers. I unloaded my horse and saddle at the train and several of us went toward the Little Wichita River, the way they told us the robbers went. About an hour before sundown, we met the sheriff and posse coming back to the city. We insisted on the sheriff going back with us to look for them. But he said they had crossed the river and were out of his country. We then called for volunteers. About fifteen men went with us. We saw where the robbers had got to the river, but they did not cross the river at that point. We all stopped and held a conference. Most of the crowd went down to a bridge on the river and crossed the river. I rode up the river with Sergeant Sullivan and several other rangers. We soon found their horses tied in a thicket and saw where they had waded the river. The river was too boggy to cross on horseback, so I tied my horse and waded the river, carrying my rifle and sixshooter in my hands. The water was about waist deep. We saw nothing of them that day, although we were satisfied that they were in some thicket in that vicinity.

About 8 o'clock that night we discovered them, after they had come out of a thicket, crossing an open space of prairie to another thicket about 600 yards away. Captain McDonald, Jack Harvey, Bob McClure and Lee Queen entered the north side of the thicket and Sergeant Sullivan and myself the south side of the thicket. We all came upon the robbers about the same time and demanded their surrender. When we found sixshooters on the ground a few minutes later, we discovered they were cocked, which showed that they came very near fighting us. They had their rifles hidden in Wichita Falls, but after they robbed the bank and were leaving town, the citizens prevented them from getting them.

Part of the Texas Ranger force assigned to El Paso, Texas in 1896 to prevent the Maher-Fitzsimmons fight. Present are 1—Adjutant General W. H. Mabry, 2—Capt. John R. Hughes, 3—Capt. J. A. Brooks, 4—Capt. W. J. (Bill) McDonald, 5—Capt. J. H. Rogers, 6—Creed Taylor, 7—John Hess, 8—Bob Chew, 9—Sgt. Throckmorton, 10—J. H. Evetts, 11—George Horton, 12—Billy McCauley, 13—Lee Queen, 14—Jim (Woolly) Bell, 15—Ed Flint, 16—James Fulgam, 17—Ed Donley, 18—Sgt. W. J. L. Sullivan, 19—Jack Harwell, 20—Bob McClure, 21—Ed Conley, 22—Andy Ferguson, 23—W. M. Burwell, 24—John Moore, 25—C. F. Heirs (or Hiers), 26—C. L. (Kid) Rogers, 27—Thalis T. Cook, 28—Doc Neal, 29—Edgar Neil, 30—Ed Bryant, 31—Doctor Lozier, and 32—George Tucker.

Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library



Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Wichita Falls, Texas in 1900, four years after Delony had been sent there to investigate a robbery of the town bank (three-story building at right).

We recovered the money they had taken from the bank. Six hundred and seventy-seven dollars and ten cents. We then went to a house close by and got supper, after which we returned to Wichita Falls, arriving there about four o'clock in the morning. When we got to the river with the robbers, they said, "Are you all going to make us wade the river? Why not go down to the bridge?"

I said, "You are going to wade that river. We not only waded the river but several creeks looking for you robbers." We guarded the jail the remainder of the night and all the next day.

That evening I received a wire from the governor to go back to Cuero, as the sheriff and district judge had wired him that everything was quiet and they had sworn in twenty-five men to help the sheriff guard the jail and did not need rangers any longer. I left that evening on the south-bound train for Fort Worth. I stopped at a hotel when I got to Fort Worth that night and had my horse put up in a stable. The next morning about sunup I heard the news boys crying out all about the hanging in Wichita Falls. I sent down after a paper and saw where the mob had hung Elmer Lewis and Foster Crawford to a telegraph pole in the streets of Wichita Falls.

The Mystery Murder

On the 18th day of January, 1897, William Pearce and his brother were killed in a barber shop in Cuero. They both lived at Clinton. My investigation showed that the Pearce brothers, John York, and one or two more Clinton men got into a fight in a saloon near the barber shop. They fought with their fists, and then they went out back of the saloon and fought with pieces of firewood, etc. Then it seemed that someone drew a pistol, and the Clinton boys were unarmed so they ran down the alley to the barber shop, and the Pearce brothers and John York followed them. John York yelled, "They have guns, look out!" and a cousin of John York's handed John a pistol. Just then he saw someone at the back door. He fired out the door, then turned and ran out of the front door of the barber shop, jumped on his horse and made his getaway. Less than a minute after John shot, two shots were fired from a back window of the barber shop and both of the Pearce brothers fell dead, shot through the heart. A great many people of Cuero thought that two certain young men did the killing who lived in Cuero, but I soon found out that the two young men were not guilty. Tom Stell and his deputies worked on this case day and night for several weeks. We found lots of circumstantial evidence pointing to a certain young man living in the country not far from Cuero. A pistol was found in a cistern, near the murder, with three empty shells, two of the same calibre as found near the bodies of the murdered men. The man was supposed to carry his pistol on an empty shell, so as to avoid accidents. Afterward I found a pistol in the suspect's house; it was the same calibre as the bullets found after the killing.

One day while court was in session and I was riding for the grand jury, Judge Wilson called me before him and swore me in again with another man to go with me. He handed me a bench warrant to bring into court the body of the suspect.

I pulled off my coat and unbuckled my belt and laid them on the table. The judge said, "What are you going to do, Lewis?"

I said "Judge, I am going to bring into court the man, but I am not going out there to have a shooting match with him, for I would have to kill him or he would kill me. He is my friend and I am his friend. We have always been friendly. I think I can persuade him to come peaceably before the court. If I can not get him to come, I will arrest and hold him until help comes; that is, I will read the warrant to him and stay with him."

When we rode up to his gate, he was sitting on the gallery with a shotgun in his hands, both barrels cocked, so the young man told me afterward. I never noticed if he had the gun cocked or not. He says, "It took two of you to come and get me, Lewis."

I said "No,———, this man is riding for the grand jury also, and came by with me." I got off of my horse, went to the gate, and said, "———, I want to get a drink of water."

He said, "Alright, Lewis." I then opened the gate and stepped aside from in front of that gun. I'd gone to the gallery and to the water bucket. It had a gourd dipper in the bucket. After I had drunk, I turned around to him. I was standing back of him when I saw that he still had the gun down on the man at the gate. The man had got behind a tree for protection. Mrs. ——— came to the door.

I spoke to her and said, "Mrs. ———, please take this shotgun away from your son." She walked up to him and took the gun away from him and took it in the room. I then read the warrant to him and told him to come with me to court.

He said, "Hell no, I am not going before that grand jury any more."

I said, "Why?"

He says, "You know why."

I said, "———, the jury cannot compel you to give evidence against yourself in any way. If you know of any law having been broken in DeWitt County, it is your duty to tell them about it, but not to incriminate yourself."

I begged and talked to him for an hour, and he would not come, saying, "Let the damn sheriff come and get me, I want to take a shot at him anyhow."

I then told the deputy that was with me to go back to Cuero and tell the judge that I had the man under arrest, but he refuses to go with me. He wants the sheriff to come and get him.

The deputy went back to Cuero, but I stayed with the suspect. In a short while Oscar Swift and several other men came to the house, rode up to the back fence about 200 yards from the house, and called Mr.——— out to the fence. I walked out with him. Oscar Swift asked him why he did not come with me to court?

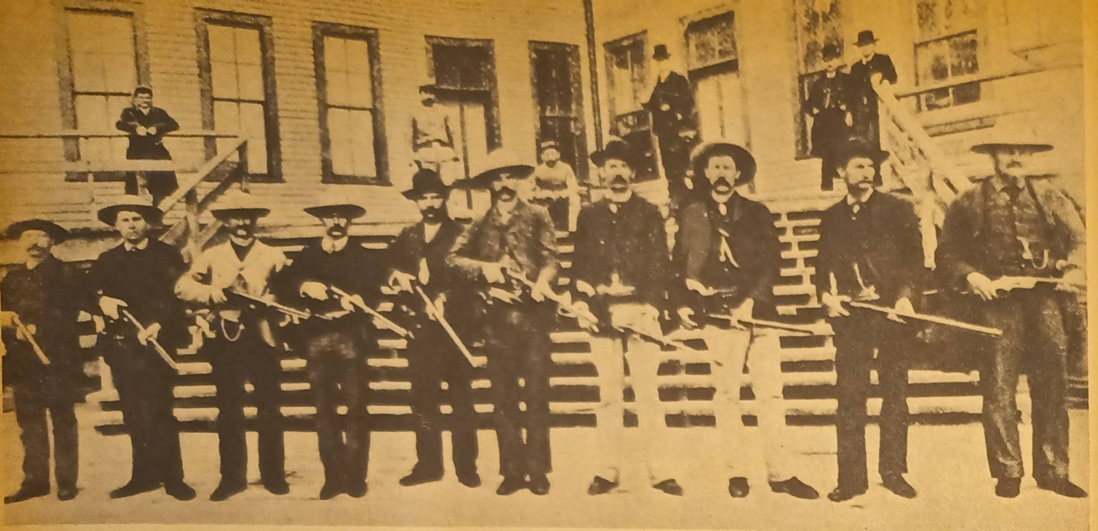
He said, "Because I wanted that damn sheriff to come and get me."

Oscar told him, "You know that there are enough of us here to tie you down and take you to court."

He then said, "If you d——— ——— ——— will go back to town I will go with Lewis to court."

They all then went back to town, except the deputy who was with me. After they were gone, Mr.——— told the deputy to go drive his horse up to the lot. When we went back to the house, he pulled off his sixshooter and handed it to his mother. Then we went out to the lot and he saddled his horse, and we three went to town. He talked as we went back and seemed to be in good humor. When we got to the courthouse, I took him before Judge Wilson.

The judge talked very rough to him and told him he ought to place him in jail for the way he talked about the court



Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Texas Rangers on duty in Fort Worth, Texas during an 1886 railroad strike included (from left) Will Owens, Henry Putts, J. C. Barringer, Sam Pickett, Charles Kuhley, G. H. Clark, J. R. Robinson, Cpl. J. W. Durbin, Lt. A. C. Grimes, and Capt. G. H. Smith.

and the officers. The young man had told the judge everything Mr.——— had said. The judge said, "You must go before the grand jury and answer every question they ask, either yes or no." I then took him to the jury room. He did not stay in there but a very short while before he came out. The foreman handed the door bailiff a note and told him to give it to the judge, and I took the man back before the judge and handed him the note. The judge asked him why he did not talk while before the grand jury? He said he had nothing to talk about. The judge remanded him to jail and said he would keep him in there until he did talk.

He stayed in jail several days. Oscar Swift would take him before the jury every day, but he refused to answer any questions they asked him. After keeping him in jail several days, the judge turned him loose. He went home and killed himself.

Thus ended the mystery murder. The state could not get evidence strong enough to convict anyone, although several hundred men viewed the bodies within half an hour or less after the shooting.

* * *

In January 1900, I quit the contracting business. I went into a partnership with Mr. Quin Walker, a very wealthy man. We went into the packing house business, beef and ice on the side. Mr. Walker owned a packing house in Eagle Lake. It had been idle for years. I took Water-Works Joe and a young man by the name of Bowers to Eagle Lake, and we repaired this old plant and got it in good shape so it would run. I then built an ice house or factory, making fifty tons of ice in a day and night. We then secured a contract with the State of Texas to furnish beef to all of the convict camps and Huntsville for five years.

We were doing fine and it looked like I was going to get rich. At the time of the Galveston storm, my books showed over $20,000 profit. On the 8th day of September, a storm struck the coast and destroyed Galveston and damaged all south Texas. It blew the ice factory away, took up the vats, and I have not seen an ice can of ours since. The roof was blown off the packing plant. We had eighty beeves and about one hundred hogs in cold storage and lost them all. The boilers were blown across the street. I had gone to Cuero the day before to see my family and was in Cuero the night of the storm.

I had two brothers living in Houston but couldn't reach them by wire. Did not know whether they were killed or not. I received a wire from Mr. Walker saying Galveston and Houston were gone and we are ruined. On the ninth of September, I rode horseback to Eagle Lake eighty miles and got there before dark. The next day found me back in harness again as a peace officer. I helped the sheriff guard the men while they dug ditches and buried dead people. Martial law was in force.

We left Eagle Lake with four wagons loaded. One of them had our bedding and provisions in it, the other three were loaded with scraper, picks, crow bars, spades and long handle shovels, and a few sledge hammers. When we arrived near Rosenberg, we found where the train had blown off the track. The engine was several hundred yards from the track, and some of the coaches were at least a mile from the track. We found the coaches full of dead people; only a few were alive. They were running around wild and could not tell you their names. Some of them had to be roped and tied so as to keep them in the wagon. They were all sent to Houston.

We dug ditches and buried dead people for twelve days. We would take the rings off the fingers, a lock of hair, put them in an envelope, and send them to Houston for identification. We also had to bury dead horses and cattle to keep down pestilence.

When I got back to Eagle Lake, we got busy and got the packing house at Houston to take over our contract and we got relieved of our bond. I had two horses down there that we drove to the ice wagon. I rode one and led the other to Cuero, getting home after dark dead broke. Lost everything I owned except my homestead in Cuero. I figured that I lost at least $50,000 that night. I turned gray as a rat; my wife did not know me when I arrived home that night. There was no work going on in Cuero, but Fort Worth was booming so I left for that city at once. They paid me sixty dollars for guarding and that was the only cash money I had. I divided with my wife so she could have something to eat.

The day I arrived in Fort Worth, I made a contract with Mr. Googeon, superintendent of Swift Packing Company, to build a five room house on the north side. Afterward I built several more houses for him. I had a cousin by the name of Marion Waller who was an architect in Fort Worth. I figured out of his office and soon landed a twenty-five thousand residence. Built it for Walter Scott. I sent for W. W. McCaskell and Louis Franke of Cuero to work for me. They both came, they were both fine mechanics. Mr. W. W. McCaskell was my foreman for some time after he came.

* * *

In the fall of 1902, while I was building the Methodist parsonage at Polytechnic Heights in Fort Worth, I had an altercation or fuss with a very bad man. He was a Bohemian I think. He was working in Mr. Marion Waller's architect office. Marion Waller had passed on my work on the building the day before. He said he was going out of the city for a few days, so gave me an estimate on my work so I could get my money.

It seemed that he had left this man in charge of his buildings. So this man came out to my building one morning while I was away at another building close by. The painters were putting inside finish on ceilings and walls with hard oil finish. He asked them what they were doing. They did not like him (that fellow did not know paint from hard oil finish). He told them after looking at the specifications to quit work at once. He then asked for me.

Courtesy John R. Peavey

Fort Brown at Brownsville, Texas in 1916. Ten years earlier, a shooting spree by soldiers in the town had brought Delony down for an investigation. Elements above are the 13th U.S. Cavalry and the 4th Field Artillery.

Some one came and told me that a Slav had come out there and told them to quit work. I went to the building and found this fellow there. I asked him what he was doing there?

He said, "I am looking after Mr. Waller's buildings while he is out of the city." He said, "This ceiling will all have to come off."

I asked, "Why?"

He said, "It is not according to specifications."

I said, "You fool, Mr. Waller passed on this work yesterday; you have no right to come to my buildings." He showed me a paper signed by Marion Waller telling him to look after certain buildings, but my buildings were not included. I got mad and ordered him out of the building.

He started to go, but turned back and said, "I will be back out here tomorrow, and if you have $500 for me, I will pass up the work and give you an estimate for your money Saturday." He did not know that Marion Waller had already given me an estimate.

I told him not to come out any more. "If you do, you will get into trouble." I meant about the five hundred bribe he offered.

He came out the next day. I was not there, but they sent after me and when I came in the room where he was, he said, "Let me see you a minute," and stepped into another room where there was no one, except a man who was putting a lock on a door. He said, "You got that money?"

I said, "You get out of here, or I will have you arrested." He then made at me with a knife. I jumped backward and fell over a chest of tools. He came on top of me and struck at me with the knife. I moved sideways, and he stuck the knife into the chest. I had my hammer in my belt.

I jerked it out and hit him over the head. He fell off of me onto the floor. I then jumped up and was going to hit him again when the carpenter took the hammer away from me.

In the meanwhile two or three preachers and two other men who came out with the man in a buggy took him out and washed the blood off of him and his friends and took him to the hospital. That bunch had me indicted for assault to murder. The next day was Saturday. A deputy sheriff came and arrested me. He had a twelve hundred dollar bond with him. I made bond in a few minutes and he went back to the city.

When the time come for the trial, I had Walter Scott to defend me, of the firm of Scott and McClain. Mr. W. W. McCaskell and Louis Franke were character witnesses for me in that case, both of them from Cuero. The jury was out only a few minutes and brought in a verdict of not guilty, and I walked out a free man. The grand jury only hears one side of a question. If they had brought me and my witnesses before them they would not have found a bill.

The Murder of Jeff McClain in Fort Worth

In 1904, Jeff McClain was district attorney of Tarrant County, Texas. In June I think it was, he and the sheriff's department made a raid on a gambling house near a hotel where I was stopping. They were taking the gambling devices, tables, etc., into the street and Jeff McClain was supervising the job. He was standing in the street when a gambler shot him down.

I heard the shots and ran to the door and saw several men running to him. I also saw a man running off down the street with a pistol in his hand toward a lumber yard. The sheriff came running up and asked me what had happened. I told him a man was shot.

He said, "Which way did he go?"

I said, "He ran down the street toward that lumber yard."

He said, "Come and help me catch him."

I said, "Alright, as soon as I can get my sixshooter." I ran into my room and got it.

The sheriff then told the police deputies to go down the street and surround the lumber yard. The sheriff and I, with several others, ran to the lumber yard. The sheriff asked the clerk at the office if he had seen any one go into the lumber yard. He said yes, he had seen a man turn into the yard with something in his hand; he thought it was a pistol.

The yard was surrounded by officers, and the sheriff, myself and several others walked into the yard where there were great piles of lumber. The sheriff called the man by name and told him to come out and give up, as he had the yard surrounded and he could not get out and would starve to death for want of water and food. He also told him that a mob was gathering up town and if they found him he could not protect him. He then came out with his hands up, the sheriff searched him, and said, "Where is your pistol?" It took them about an hour to find the pistol.

We caught the stockyard car and went to the jail with him. We had been there only a short while when five or six hundred men came and demanded the prisoner. The sheriff told them they could not get him as he was now in the hands of the law and he must stand trial by law and not by mob.

They said they would burn the courthouse and jail if he did not let them have the man. They stood around there about an hour and finally went off. We guarded the jail all that evening but had no more trouble until about 11 o'clock at night.

Then about 5,000 men came with shotguns, picks, and crow bars. We had the courthouse surrounded with officers. About fifty men came right up to where the sheriff was standing and told him to give them the prisoner. They said, "We do not want to hurt you or anyone else." The sheriff told them that he had the courthouse and jail surrounded by officers, and they would fight if necessary to save the prisoner. He said, "You men had better go home and behave yourselves. You are breaking the law, and you know it." They walked back and held a conference for some time.

The sheriff then put in a call for the fire department to come to the courthouse and jail at once to prevent a fire. In a few minutes they came and when the crowd rushed toward the courthouse, the sheriff commanded the fire boys to turn the hoses on the crowd. The force of water knocked several dozen or more down, and they ran off out of reach of the hoses. Several times they would come up close and the water was turned on them. After about an hour, they went off. We guarded the jail all night, but had no more trouble. Jeff McClain was loved by almost everyone in Fort Worth.

The Conditt Murder Mystery

A terrible crime occurred at Edna, Jackson County, Texas—Monk Gibson's arrest and escape, the greatest manhunt in history.

On September 28th, 1905, two miles from the little town of Edna, during the temporary absence of J. F. Conditt—employed in the rice harvest seven miles distant—his wife and four young children, ranging in ages from a baby boy of three to a little girl of twelve, were murdered in broad daylight—their bodies left as they had fallen in and about the premises. The murders were committed in the most brutal and bloody way, with knife, axe, and such household tools and implements as came to hand. Three of the murdered children were boys. The little girl of twelve had been violated. Only an infant of a few months had been left alive. Its details would fill a volume and belong only in the official records, neither are they yet complete at this writing. I was living in Fort Worth. On the morning of the 29th of September, 1905, I received a wire or night letter from Governor S. W. T. Lanham, telling me that I had been appointed special ranger, and that my commission was being mailed to Edna. He ordered me to go at once to Edna and help to run down the murderers of a white woman and four children by the name of Conditt. I left at once for Edna. I arrived there on the 30th of September. I went to the post office and got my commission, then went to a livery stable and hired a horse and saddle. I then went to Mr. Gibson's house, the man who found the dead bodies. He went with me where the bodies were lying. We then went with a lot of men to look for Monk Gibson, who had escaped from the officers two nights before. I found Monk Gibson's parents in jail and talked to them. They said Monk came home for dinner that day and told them about seeing a negro man running Mrs. Conditt around the house and heard her scream and afterwards saw two negro men run away from the house. His mother said she told him to go and tell the white folks what he saw while plowing in the field.

He then ran to a white man's house by the name of Gibson and told him what he had seen. Mr. Gibson ran to the house at once and found the dead bodies. She said Mr. Gibson then put Monk on a horse and sent him to get Mr. Conditt, who was working several miles off.

After Monk Gibson had been found, I talked to him in the jail, and he told me exactly the same story that his mother told me. Then he said he was plowing for Mr. Conditt in the field close to the house. He said when he got to the end of the row he was plowing, near the house, he heard someone screaming and saw a negro man running Mrs. Conditt around the house; a few minutes after that he saw two men running off from the house. The only lie I caught him in was that he did not know who they were. I knew from the way he talked and looked that he did know who they were. I have been among negroes all my life and I know the negro race, and I know if Monk Gibson had murdered that family by himself, he would have kept going after he had got on that horse. He never would have gone and got Mr. Gibson if he had been guilty as principal.

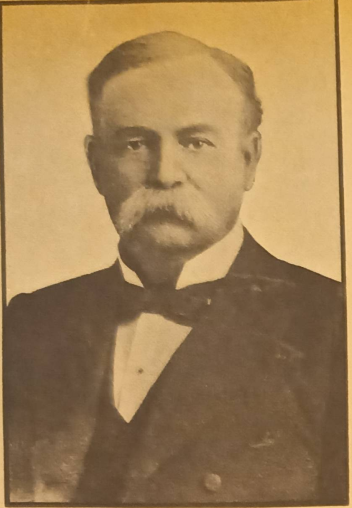
Felix Powell was in jail also. I talked to him and soon became convinced he was guilty. I asked him about his friends, if he had one that would help him. Among those he mentioned was a woman by the name of Augusta Diggs. I went to see her at once and told her if she did not tell me all about who did the murder, I would have her put in jail.

She said, "Mr., I don't know who did that killing. I was not there."

I said, "Did you not do Felix Powell's washing?"

She said, "Sometimes, but when he brought me his bloody shirt to wash for him, I refused to do so, and he took it to Mrs. Reed, and she washed it for him." I at once went to the Reed woman. She said she had washed a shirt for Felix, but it was not bloody. She said she sometimes washed for Henry Howard, and that Felix and Henry were good friends and run together. I then went to see the Howard negro.

He said he didn't know Felix Powell, only when he saw him, but while I was talking to him he was very nervous and trembling so he could not stand still. I soon was convinced of his guilt. At the time I left Edna, I had proof that those two negroes did the killing. When the indictments was found, the prisoners were removed to San Antonio for safekeeping.



Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Texas Governor S. W. T. Lanham (above) assigned Delony investigative duties in Edna and Brownsville.

So when the train was about due we quietly and swiftly hurried him to the station and put him aboard. He landed in San Antonio safely. As soon as we left, Felix Powell was turned out of jail. I caught the first train out of San Antonio for Austin, made my report to the Governor in person, and told him that the district attorney had Felix Powell indicted for the principal only. I pleaded with the Governor to open the case, so the ones that was guilty could be tried. He said he would do so after the trial of Monk Gibson. I told him that no sane jury would convict Monk as the only one that did that murder. Sure enough when the trial came up in the winter, there was a hung jury. I was told that they stood seven for acquittal and five for guilty.

After the trial, the Governor opened the case again and sent Captain McDonald and his rangers to investigate. Both Powell and Gibson paid the extreme penalty of their crime. Powell went to the gallows at Victoria, Texas on the 2nd of April, 1907. Monk Gibson was hanged at Cuero in June 1908. I was on the platform when Monk Gibson was hung. He made no confession.

Henry Howard and the Diggs woman were arrested but had not been disposed of when this was written.

The Brownsville Episode

The year 1906, on the night of August 13th, armed men in number from ten to twenty, believed to be colored soldiers of the Twenty-fifth Infantry quartered at Brownsville, Texas, appeared about midnight upon streets and shot up the town, firing recklessly into the many buildings, killing one man, severely wounding another and endangering the lives of many citizens.

Official investigation failed to identify the offenders and three months later, President Roosevelt, assuming that the offense was nevertheless committed by certain members of the Twenty-fifth Infantry with guilty knowledge on the part of their comrades, dismissed the entire command without honor on the ground that the three companies numbering 170 men had banded in a conspiracy of silence for the purpose of shielding those who took part in the original conspiracy of murder.

Brownsville is a city of less than 10,000 population situated on the north bank of the Rio Grande in the extreme southern portion of the state. It has long been a military point—its garrison, Fort Brown being situated but a little way from the business center. Opposite Brownsville on the Mexican side of the river lies Matamoras.

Late in the summer of 1906, three negro companies—B, C, and D of the Twenty-fifth Infantry, Major C. W. Penrose commanding, were ordered to Brownsville and quartered at Fort Brown. They arrived July 28th in bad humor. There was a military encampment of state troops at Austin and they had not been permitted to participate in the maneuvers—drills, sham battles and the like—in progress there. They had been told that the Texas boys did not care to drill with them—that if they went to Austin and took part in the sham battles, blank cartridges might be discarded for real ones by the white troops. Of course this was idle talk, but they resented it and nursed their resentment, becoming noisy and braggart, as ignorant men whether white or negro will. On the way, they had torn down the signs "For negroes," placed by law in the south in the cars intended for colored passengers, and had boasted to the conductor that "All women in Brownsville would look alike to them, whether white, negro or Mexican."

Monday, August 13th was a rather quiet day, owing to the restrictions, and a majority of the citizens perhaps believed that their troubles with the military were over. But there were others who claimed to have heard muttered threats, and these as evening drew on were anxious and watchful. It was about midnight that a barkeeper named Natus was serving a final round of drinks to a few belated customers, white men, in a saloon where a bar had been erected for the accommodation of negro soldiers. The men lingering about the bar were talking quietly and it is certain that they had been discussing the possibility of an outbreak from the garrison. Suddenly they were startled by a succession of shots, loud voices and a general commotion from the direction of the fort.

One of the group cried out: "That must be the niggers coming now." A fusillade followed coming nearer. The bar-keeper, Natus, sprang to the front doors, flung them shut and fastened them. An instant later he ran into the backyard to prevent entrance in that quarter. He was not in time. Before he could close the gate, he received a volley and dropped dead. The mob of murderers passed on, pouring their fire into houses where men, women and little children were asleep. Their course was up an alley leading from the fort through the town. Already, before killing Natus, they had fired on a house in which were two women and five children—one of the shots putting out a lamp.

Ten shots had passed through this house, all aimed about four-and-a-half feet above the floor, evidently intended to kill. They had next met the chief of police, fired upon him, killing his horse and shattering his arm. Next came the Miller Hotel, where they fired at guests in the windows, breaking the glass and filling the casements with bullets. They shot at whatever they saw moving and whenever they saw a light. In a house where a woman and two children were asleep, two bullets passed through the mosquito bar that covered their bed. For two blocks and a half the assault on the defenseless street continued, then suddenly the assassins disappeared in the direction of the fort—the midnight raid was over. In ten minutes had been written a unique chapter in the history of the American army—a chapter that would be told and retold and debated and deformed until its volumes would fill a library.

On the 19th of August, 1906, Governor Lanham called me over the phone and said to please come at once to his office, as he wanted to see me. I jumped into my buggy and drove as fast as I could to the Capitol. I of course thought someone had been robbed. When I arrived at his office, I sent in my card and he at once admitted me. He seemed to be very much distressed and was walking up and down in his office.

He came and shook hands with me and said, "I sent for you, I need you very badly."

I asked, "What is the matter?"

He said, "Brownsville has been shot up by the negro troops, but Major Penrose has denied this and said that a drunken bunch of Mexicans had shot up the town. I want you to go down there and investigate the matter for me."

I said, "Governor, I am a very busy man. I cannot possibly get off."

He said, "You must go. You are the person I can trust, as my personal representative. I want you to go down there for me, and if possible try to save the women and children."

I said, "Where are your Rangers?"

He said, "I have wired Captain McDonald to take his four Rangers and go there at once, where he will investigate the murders. He cannot get up the detailed account I want. I want you to go down there, and investigate this matter in my name, and make your private report to me in person."

I said, "Well, Governor, if you look at it that way, I will go."

He said, "Thank God, I have been threatened of everything, even treason by the President of the United States. Please go at once." I bid him goodbye and went to my office and got busy, told my men what to do, and wired the Southwestern Life Insurance Company at Dallas, telling them I would be out of the city for a few days on very important business, as I was superintendent of that company with thirteen counties under me.

Detective Lewis S. Delony on the Job

I arrived in Brownsville on the 23rd of August and found Captain Bill McDonald and four Rangers there. I went to Judge Welch and showed him my authority and requested his help in this matter. He promised to help me. He went over to the hotel and found Major Penrose and introduced me to him. He gave me the pass word and also gave me a note to the guard of day to admit me at any time.

I then got busy. When I went into the fort the next morning, I met General Blocksome. He said he was there to investigate the matter for the President and I told him I was there to investigate the matter for the Governor of the State of Texas. I knew Blocksome personally, having met him in Waco at a dinner once. He was glad to see me, we worked together from then on, and I think my report to the Governor and his report to the President were about the same. It did not take me but a few hours to find out that the report that the drunken Mexicans from Matamoras had shot up the town was not true.

Photos Courtesy Austin-Travis County Collection, Austin Public Library

Lewis Delony lived in Austin, Texas from 1906 until 1915, boarding at the Austin House (top), Brazos at Mulberry Streets. His Austin Detective Bureau office was in the First National Bank Building (above), then located on the northwest corner of Sixth and Congress, today the site of a Woolworth store.

I found out the names of thirteen negro soldiers who shot up the town. I stayed there four days and came back to Austin and made my report to Governor Lanham in person. It was a private report and he sent it to the President, I suppose. It must have taken effect with General Blocksome's report to the President, for in about three months, the President discharged the entire command without honor, 170 men for conspiracy of silence. Thus ended one of the most disgraceful episodes that has ever happened in Texas.

The Pardoning of Mr. John York by Governor Lanham in Dec. 1906

While I was living in Austin, I received a letter from my youngest brother, J. M. (Myrt) Delony. He was going to the Normal School in Huntsville, Texas. He requested me to see the Governor and try to get him to pardon John York. He said that his lawyers had failed to get a pardon and that the governor had refused to listen to them again. My brother was a great friend of John York, as was I. I felt like I should do something for him, as his grandfather, Mr. John York had signed my father's bond for assessor and collector of taxes for DeWitt County in 1851.

I got busy and went before the pardon board in his behalf. The board informed

Courtesy Aultman Collection, El Paso Public Library

Presidents William Howard Taft and Porfirio Diaz pose on the steps of the custom house in Juarez, Mexico during their meeting in El Paso, Texas and Juarez on October 16, 1909. Delony does not appear to be in the picture but presumably is close at hand.

me that they had already approved his pardon, but Governor Lanham would not agree to his pardon. They told me I could see him, but they did not think it would do any good.

Just as I was going out of the door, I met the governor. Knowing that I was closer to him than any other man in Austin and had more influence with him, I approached him at once. I said, "Governor, I want to speak to you a few minutes. I have a request to make or rather a favor to ask."

He said, "Mr. Delony, I will grant most any favor you should ask of me." I then told him I wanted him to pardon my friend, Mr. John York, from DeWitt County.

He bawled me out and said, "I am surprised at you, a man of your standing to ask me to pardon a thief and turn him loose on the community." He repeated it several times.

I looked him in the eyes and slapped my hand on his shoulder and said, "Governor, Jesus Christ pardoned a thief on the cross and turned him loose in heaven. Are you any better than He is?"

He turned white and his hands trembled and he said, "You tell Mrs. York her husband will be with her Christmas." This was about two weeks before Christmas. I wrote Mrs. York that I had succeeded in getting her husband pardoned and that he would be home Christmas. I am sure some of Mrs. York's children have that letter on file at this time.

* * *

In March 1906, I was transferred to Austin from Bonham, Texas by the Southwestern Life Insurance Company of Dallas as district manager for several counties, with headquarters at Austin. A few weeks after I moved to Austin I was appointed special policeman in the city. About three months after this, I became chief of the detective bureau at Austin.

We had lots of trouble with the students. The city had passed a law forbidding them to parade the streets in their shirt tails. Five or six mounted police were placed at the end of Congress Avenue, near where the old Central House stood. When the crowd came from the capitol, the police tried to stop them. They pulled the policemen off their horses and treated them very badly.

It was impossible to stop the parade. We had a hard time trying to keep the peace and dignity of the city and state. In July I was elected a delegate to the Democratic State Convention at San Antonio. O. B. Colquitt was nominated Governor. After Colquitt was nominated, someone started to make a speech in favor of Joseph W. Bailey. When his name was mentioned, the convention went wild, nearly all of the banners were carried upon the rostrum for Joe Bailey. I started with the Travis County banner. Someone tried to stop me, but I jerked loose from him and took the banner to the rostrum. Mr. Davis, the mayor of Fort Worth, started with the Tarrant County banner. Two or three men grabbed him and threw him down and they were fighting. Mr. Will Morris, the Sergeant-at-Arms, pulled them up and he got up and ran with the banner and took it upon the platform. The demonstration lasted over an hour. Several men and women fainted and were carried out of the hall. When I lived in Waco several years after this, I was a delegate to the Democratic Convention at Waco. It was the first time a woman was ever a delegate to a Democratic convention. It was the most quiet one I ever attended and the driest one. You could not get a drink of ice water in the hall much less anything else. There were some good prohibition speeches made, but when it was all over, the women nominated a drinking man for governor.

I have already written about the Hogg convention. I was a delegate to the convention. When Campbell was elected, Joe Bailey made a speech for Campbell and sang, "The Campbells are Coming, Ha Ha," and carried the convention for Mr. Campbell.

President Taft Visits Texas

President William H. Taft came to Texas in 1910, I think it was. Cecil Lyons was the Republican National Committeeman for Texas. He came to Austin to my office and told me that he had appointed me as a bodyguard for the President while he was in the State of Texas.

I told him I was a hellroaring Democrat, why did he not get some Republican to guard him? He said, "Politics are not in this. I want a man I can trust, a fearless man. One that would lay his life down to protect the President. You are the man I want." I told him that he was my President also, and I would consider it a great honor to guard Mr. Taft through Texas. He said, "Let's go to Dallas, he will be there tomorrow." I went with him to Dallas and was introduced to the President by Mr. Lyons. The committee gave him a banquet that night and he spoke after the banquet. I sat on the platform with the President and Mr. Lyons about eight feet from him; he had four secret service men with him to guard him, while in Texas. Cecil Lyons and myself stayed with the President every day from the time he got up in the morning until he went to bed. Two of the other guards were with him during the day. Every county seat we would get to, a sheriff or deputy would get on the train and ride to the next county seat. All the way through Texas we had a sheriff or deputy on the train. When we got to El Paso, Texas, another large banquet was given and the President made a speech. He rode in his private Pullman car and slept and ate on the train.

The next morning after we arrived in El Paso, about 11 o'clock, the President went out on the bridge leading to Mexico. There was a white mark across the bridge, showing where the United States stopped.

President Diaz of Mexico and President Taft of the United States met. Each one stood on his side of the mark and held a conference for one hour. We stood about twenty feet from the President, Cecil Lyons and myself and the four other guards. No reporters or photographers were allowed on the bridge. The sheriff and the city police kept the crowd back. We left El Paso that evening for San Antonio. From San Antonio we went to the King Ranch house at Kingsville. We had a great time there, dancing and eating. We spent two days at the King Ranch riding and hunting. We then went to the Taft Ranch, spent a day there riding over the ranch and looking at the cattle.

From there we went to Brownsville and the President went out to the Flag Ship inside the three-mile limit. We all got on the steamer and went out to the Flag Ship. There we bid him good-bye and Cecil Lyons and myself came back to the city and we pulled out for San Antonio. And after getting my pay I went back to Austin, where I lived and was Chief of the Austin Detective Bureau.

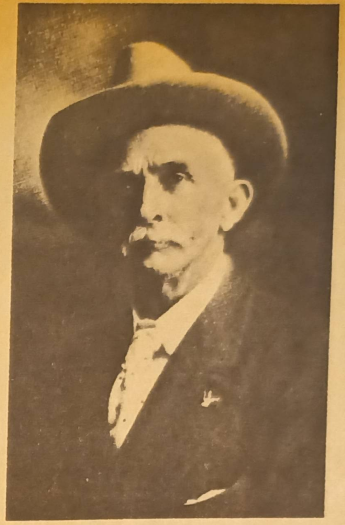
Mr. Taft was a fine man and I liked him very much. He often talked to me, almost as much as he did to Cecil Lyons.

The Hanging of Bill Brock in Austin

It was in the summer of 1912 that Mrs. Brock, mother of Bill Brock, a very old lady, came to me and requested me to sign a petition to the governor for a pardon to life in the pen. I had heard Bill Brock testify in the case. He said that when the woman ran up to him with a knife and began cutting at him, he grabbed hold of her and turned her around and punched her in the back of her neck with a pistol and that it went off accidentally and killed her. I know from experience that a pistol will go off accidentally, when you least expect it. As he said he did not intend to kill her, I gave him the benefit of the doubt and signed the petition for a pardon to the pen for life. But Governor Colquitt refused to interfere and would not sign a pardon for him. So he was hung that year.

I was living in Austin at that time, as chief of the detective bureau in Austin, and was on the platform with several officers when he was hung. The deputy sheriff placed the rope around his neck and pulled the knot up under his left ear, but did not pull it tight enough, so when the trap was let loose and he fell, the knot slipped around to the back of his neck and his throat was cut from ear to ear. I don't think his neck was broken. He bled to death. It was a gruesome sight, blood over everything. When the doctor pronounced him dead, he was cut down and placed in a pine box and sent to the undertaker and washed and a new suit of clothes was placed on him and the body was turned over to his mother and brother for burial. I have seen several hangings in my life but this was the most horrible and gruesome one I ever saw.

I lived in Austin from April 1, 1906, until July 1, 1915. Jim Ferguson was governor when I left Austin. I had many thrilling experiences, such as trying to prevent shirt tail parades down the streets of Austin by the students at the State College. Often police were pulled off their horses and badly handled. There were trying times in those days, to keep the peace and dignity of the state and city.



Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Capt. Bill McDonald, Texas Ranger.

In March 1917, I was appointed a secret service man at a dollar per day and expenses. Some time in May I think it was, the U. S. marshal raided a lodge room in Abilene, F.L.P.A. they were called, and found the roster or list of names. There had been some investigation prior to this time. The latter part of May, I was ordered to Snyder, Texas, to investigate German propaganda by the I.W.W. and F.L.P.A. lodges. After I had been put out there about three weeks, Mr. Bill McDonald, the U. S. marshal, came to Snyder with three deputies and arrested about thirty men and placed them in jail. The next day he held a kangaroo court and questioned each man. It took him all day. That evening he turned them all loose, except eight. He took them to Dallas for safe-keeping and further questioning. I was very busy at that time with my insurance business.

Some time in July 1917 we located a cave in Pallapinto [Palo Pinto] County, and a good many slackers and F. L. P. A. were camped in this cave. Bill McDonald ordered two secret service men to go there and join them as lodge members. They soon found out the names of the men and where they lived. They had provisions enough to last for six months, and each of them had a highpowered rifle and 100 rounds of ammunition.

McDonald went to the fathers of these men and told them that if they did not surrender at once and volunteer in the army, they would all go to the pen for conspiracy against the United States. The fathers and friends of the men went out to see them and got them to surrender. They came out holding up their hands. The marshal then took all of the guns and ammunition to Abilene with all of the prisoners. When they arrived at Abilene they each and every man volunteered and joined the army and left that night for Fort Travis.

In August I was ordered to Waco to investigate a negro lodge. I stayed in Waco two weeks, when the marshal and two deputies came to Waco and arrested eighteen negroes and took them to Abilene. I then went back to my insurance office in Abilene.

Members of F.L.P.A. took an oath to protect each other to their death with death as the penalty for divulging secrets of the organization The first government witness told of taking oath over the Bible and pistol, dirk and strap, resolutions against war and conscription adopted at state meetings at Cisco, Texas in February 1917. In order that my readers will understand the purpose and intentions of the F.L.P.A. Lodge, I will quote part of the evidence from the first three government witnesses. There were about eighty men arrested and put in jail. The jail was in the second block from the railroad on the south side and the post office was in the second block from the railroad on the north side. When they marched that bunch of men from the jail to the post office, it looked like a young army coming with all the guards. They marched four abreast.

On the 10th of September 1917, the case was called. There were sixty-four defendants who faced the jury in United States district court here at Abilene. The predicate laid down by the district attorney, Allen, that they should perfect their organization, arm themselves to resist conscription, assist each other even to the death and affiliate with the I.W.W. were the facts shown to prove against the defendants, members of the F.L.P.A. Mr. G. C. Anderson said that he became a member of the F.L.P.A. in August 1916, being a charter member of the local. Our local was organized by Mr. Bryant, who is one of the defendants. On the day of organizing our local I talked to Mr. Lee and Mr. Bryant about it. They said it was a good thing, that it would protect the farmers and laborers, and that lawyers, merchants, doctors, newspaper editors and several other classes could not become members. That night we met and organized the Midway local. When we had met, Mr. Bryant made a speech outlining the purpose. The initatory oath in substance was that we would protect the life, limbs and property of our brother members even to death. That we would keep the secret of the organization, death being the penalty for divulging these secrets. Mr. Bryant said that the one who should divulge the oaths or secrets of this organization shall have his God-damned head cut off and kicked at his dead carcass. We took the oath on an open Bible. Across the face of the Bible were a pistol, a dirk and a leather strap.

After the oath Mr. Bryant made us another talk in which he said we had been down-trodden long enough by the government, that the farmer, laborers, miners and other workmen were being made victims of a government controlled by capital. He named the Ludlow horror and said we must arm ourselves with high-powered rifles and prepare to protect ourselves. We must be ready to use force if necessary to protect others and that in the event any member was arrested the others must take him away from the officers by force if possible, and if not to make every effort to get on the jury so that we might secure for him an acquittal in the courts of justice. Mr. Bryant said the order had fifty thousand members in Oklahoma and that the I.W.W. has three million members in the north, that these are all armed and that we must arm ourselves and be prepared to go to their help with our guns. Mr. Bryant said that this organization was opposed to war, that it would not stand for war, that members would refuse to wage any foreign war for the government and that in case of conscription we were to shoot down government officers or conscription agents with the guns they handed us for use in war. Mr. Anderson stated there was never any flag in the meeting hall and that if the matter of having one there was ever voted on, he was not present at the time. Mr. R. D. Williams was the second witness called. He was a delegate from his local to the state meeting held at Cisco, Texas in February 1917. The Haskell County resolution was read on the floor of the house. I told the others in the committee room that I could not endorse this resolution and that I would not sign it as it was treasonable, in substance, and resolved that we band ourselves together and in case of war and conscription we refuse to fight in the war or submit to conscription and in case of a foreign war that we request our officers from President down to constable to resign their offices and fight the war which they had brought about and leave us at home. I argued that it contained treason, but some of the other committeemen said that it did not, and if it did we had to use extreme measures to protect ourselves and that we had better get in line while we can or we will be marching out to the rattle of machine guns. The resolution was adopted by the convention. Bergfeldt [stated] that when the officers would resign his office and come with us he would be our brother, but that every officer to secure his office must take an oath upholding the government and President and unless he resigned he could not be one of us. He referred to the officers as weakback, bent-kneed yellow-legs and said he would not call one of them brother. One called for a secret code for use in communication. Mr. Bryant, on the charter, said the local had better save their charter money and buy high-power rifles with it and shove them under the noses of officers seeking a raid as it would do more good. Mr. Bergfeldt presented a resolution resolving that we make it a part of our iniatiatory obligation hereafter that every member arm himself with a high-power rifle and 100 rounds of ammunition and that those already members purchase same for themselves. It was passed. I said it was treasonable; Bergfeldt told me that was nothing, that he had on him papers that would send him to the federal penitentary if they were known of by the authorities. He added that he was backed up by 200,000 socialists who would have to come to him if he called on them. I think my readers will understand why the government was trying these men.

I was summoned as a government witness but was never placed on the stand. The trail lasted eight weeks with fifty defendants tried at once—the largest, the longest and the most expensive trial in the State of Texas. There were about fifteen lawyers connected with the case. Judge Atwell was the leading attorney for the defense. I think he was appointed by the federal judge. Only the leaders were convicted to serve a long term in the pen. The others were all acquitted and turned loose.

After the trial was over in October I was ordered to Waco to be stationed there during the war, and the transportation for my family and expenses were paid to Waco. I turned my insurance business over to a young man by the name of Paul Pearce and sold my home at corner of Eighth and Walnut street to Mr. Coates, an insurance man.

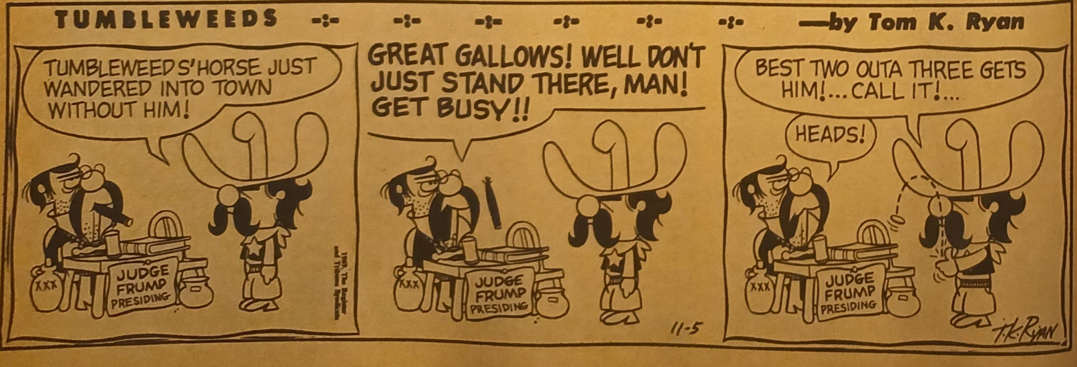
* * *

On the 28th day of October I left Abilene for Waco. There were about 20,000 troops there at that time, and the city was under martial law. M. P.'s guarded the streets day and night. The next day I secured a contract with the American Insurance Company of Galveston to collect a debt, which carried me over most of the city. I don't think that anyone ever knew that I was a detective, except my family and the government officials.

There were robberies almost every night by the soldiers. There were hundreds of soldiers that could not read or write, did not know their right foot from the left. A great many of them were from New York and other northern cities and some of them never did anything but rob and steal. So Waco was a picnic for them. I had only been there a very short while until I became very busy running them down and getting evidence to convict. In May I think it was, two M. P.'s murdered a German grocery storekeeper one evening about dark. I happened to be in the marshal's office when the news was phoned in. Two deputies and myself jumped into a car and drove out to the store in the suburb of the city, near a negro section. The marshal and two or three deputies followed us. When we got to the store, the clerk in the store was standing in front of the door talking to a crowd of people. He had the door locked, the marshal ordered the people away, the clerk unlocked the door and we all went in. The clerk then told us how it happened. He said he had gone back to shut the back door and shutters on the windows. He had just got through and started back to the front when he saw two M. P.'s come into the store; the merchant was counting his money, one of the soldiers pulled a gun and told him to hand over that money, he grabbed a pistol and started to raise it, when the man shot him in the head. He said he jumped behind some boxes and hid, so to save his life. Both the M. P.'s jumped over the counter and grabbed the money and ran out the door. He then said he ran to his boss, found him dead, then ran to the door to see which way the men went, and saw them running down a street side of a lumber yard toward the creek, where some negroes lived. The two deputies and myself was ordered to go and find them and to gather as much evidence as we could. We drove down the street to a negro woman's. I knew the woman and she knew me as an insurance agent. I went into the house and asked her if she had seen two M. P.'s go down the street within the last half hour. She said yes, that they had come to her house and asked her if they could get a tub of water to wash in, and she gave them a tub of water in a room and they took a bath. I went to the door and called one of the officers who came and then asked a great many questions. I told the woman that I came with the men to show them where she lived. She said that they had given her a one dollar bill. We told her to give us that bill, and we would give her another. She did so, and we saw spots on it that looked like human blood. It proved to be human blood on it. The M. P. then told her what had happened and that she would be a witness in the case, and she began to cry and said that the M. P. would kill her. He told her that the M. P. would not see them anymore. But if she left the city she would be caught and locked up with them.

We looked for them until midnight when the sergeant of the day phoned into the office that they had come to the camp and gone to bed, that he had placed a guard at their tent to keep them from leaving during the night. The next morning they were arrested in their bunks. Their bloody clothes were found in their tent and the money was found in a mattress. Some of it had spots of blood on the bills. A court martial trial was called for the next day and five U. S. generals formed the court. The verdict was death in front of a firing squad. They did sentence that day but gave them time to appeal to the President for a pardon. I do not know what became of them. Their company and most of the troops were overseas in June, July and August. We only had a few hundred troops in camp during September and October.

Martial law was raised in December 1918 and the city manager and police took over the city government on January 1, 1919 and the great World War was over.


TUMBLEWEEDS
—by Tom K. Ryan
TUMBLEWEEDS'HORSE JUST WANDERED INTO TOWN WITHOUT HIM!
JUDGE FRUMP PRESIDING
GREAT GALLOWS! WELL DON'T JUST STAND THERE, MAN! GET BUSY!!
BEST TWO OUTA THREE GETS HIM!... CALL IT!...
HEADS!
11-5
T.K. Ryan

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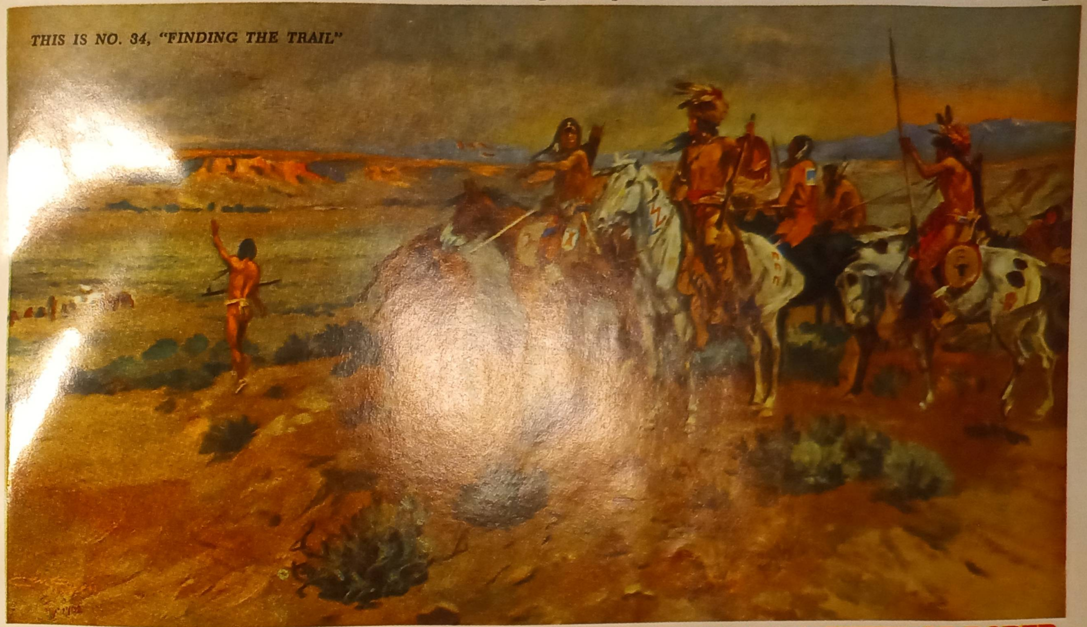
THIS IS NO. 34, "FINDING THE TRAIL"

CHOOSE FROM SELECTIONS BELOW. LIST NUMBERS ON A SHEET OF PAPER.

(PICTURE SIZE IS WIDTH BY DEPTH)

1—Ambushed, 11x14
2—A Tight Dally & Loose Latigo, 13½x9½
3—A Loose Cinch, 11x8
4—A Wounded Grizzly, 8½x11
5—Buffalo Hunt (spears), 11x7½
6—Boss of the Trail Herd, 8x10½
7—Bronc to Breakfast, 15x8½
8—Blackfeet Burning Crow Buffalo Range, 11½x8
9—Bucking Bronco, 8x11½
10—Better Than Bacon, 11x8½
11—On the Move, 13½x9½
12—Buffalo Hunt (arrows), 12½x8½
13—On the Trail, 11x7½
14—The Pony Raid, 16x11½
15—At Close Quarters 11x8½
16—Capturing the Grizzly, 15x8½
17—Cinch Ring 15x8½
18—Caught with the Goods, 14x9½
19—Cowboy Life, 10x14
20—Call of the Law, 13½x9½
21—Carson's Men, 14x9½
22—Return of the Warriors, 13½x9½
23—Piegan Indian, 9x12
24—Renegades Return, 16x11½
25—Chief Joseph, 8x11
26—Deadline on the Range, 14x9½
27—Disputed Trail, 11x14
28—Dangerous Cripple, 14x9½
29—Buffalo on the Move, 16x11½
30—Early American, 13½x9½
31—Elk in Lake McDonald, 11x8½
32—First Furrow, 8x12
33—First Wagon Tracks, 15x8½
34—Finding the Trail, 13½x9½
35—Heads or Tails, 15x8½
36—Heading the Right Way, 13½x9½
37—In Without Knocking, 13½x9½
38—Women of the Plains, 8x6
39—Innocent Allies, 14x9½
40—Indian Love Call, 13½x9½
41—Jerked Down, 15x8½
42—The Jerkline, 14x9½
43—Loops & Swift Horses Are Surer Than Lead, 10½x7
44—Last of the Herd, 15x8½
45—Last Chance or Bust, 12½x9
46—Mad Cow, 12x8
47—Meat's Not Meat Till It's in the Pan, 13½x9½
48—The Challenge, 10½x6½
49—When Arrows Spell Death, 9x7
50—Old Fashioned Stage Coach, 10x7
51—At the End of the Rope, 10½x7
52—Prospectors, 10½x8
53—Planning the Attack, 14x10
54—Pipe of Peace, 14x7
55—Who Killed the Bear?, 10½x7
56—Queen's War Hounds, 14x9½
57—Rainy Morning in a Cow Camp, 11x8½
58—Roping a Grizzly, 11x8½
59—Red Man's Wireless, 14x7
60—Roping a Wolf, 11x8½
61—Smoking Them Out, 11x10
62—Scattering the Riders, 11½x8
63—Strenuous Life, 14x9½
64—Sun Worshippers, 16x10½
65—Serious Predicament, 15x8½
66—Single Handed, 14x9½
67—Slick Ear, 14x11½
68—Smoke of a .45, 12x9
69—Sage Brush Sport, 13½x8½
70—Signal Fire, 11x14
71—When Red Man Talks War, 13½x9½
72—In Enemy Country, 13½x9½
73—The Medicine Man, 11x8½
74—Trail's End, 13½x9½
75—The Holdup, 13x8
76—The Bolter, 9½x13½
77—The Attack, 12x8
78—The Drifter, 16x11½
79—The Tenderfoot, 11x8
80—Two of a Kind Win, 13½x9½
81—Last of 5,000, 8x9½
82—When Tracks Spell Meat, 13½x9½
83—When the Nose of a Horse Beats the Eyes of a Man, 13½x9½
84—When Ignorance is Bliss, 11x14
85—Wild Horse Hunters (cowboys), 14x9
86—Wild Horse Hunters (Indians), 12½x8
87—Whose Meat?, 13½x9½
88—Wagon Boss, 16x9½
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